United Nations E/HLPF/2018/5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
31 May 2018
English
Original: Arabic, English, French and Spanish

High-level political forum on sustainable development
Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council
9–18 July 2018
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Compilation of main messages for the 2018 voluntary national reviews

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat transmits herewith the main messages of voluntary national reviews presented by 44 States members of the high-level political forum on sustainable development at its 2018 meeting, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 67/290 and 70/1.

* E/HLPF/2018/1.

18-08763 (E) 180618 060718

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Albania

[Original: English]

The Sustainable Development Goals era in Albania started on the basis of a long and successful experience of eradicating extreme poverty and reducing the risk of social exclusion, ensuring high-quality basic universal education and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Albania has embraced the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, which is designed to make a strong contribution to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and is fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda in the context of the national strategy for development and integration and the European integration process.

The accession to the European Union is the overarching priority and the most important strategic ambition of the country, as the European Union integration process has full political consensus and nationwide support as a solid way of achieving a sustainable future for the people of Albania. The success of the European integration process, culminating with the unconditional recommendation of the European Commission in April 2018 to open accession talks with Albania, has been guided by the progress and completion of many complex and interrelated reforms, among which five areas have been identified as priorities in this process:

- Public administration reform, stable institutions and a modern, professional and depoliticized civil service
- Strengthening the independence, efficiency and accountability of judicial institutions
- Increasing the fight against corruption
- Increasing the fight against organized crime
- Ensuring the protection of human rights, including property rights

The Government of Albania has affirmed its full commitment to the 2030 Agenda. The coordination and the leadership of the process is provided by the Interministerial Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals, which is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of Albania and comprises key government institutions as well as other stakeholders from the business community, civil society, academia and international organizations, including the technical support provided by the Department of Development and Good Governance within the Office of the Prime Minister and the contribution of the United Nations agencies in Albania. The Albanian Parliament unanimously approved a resolution confirming Albania's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, as it plays an important role in monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The scope of the voluntary national review is to provide information on the process of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in Albania and the results achieved. The focus of the report highlights the progress around the key government priorities, which include:

- Innovative and citizen-centred public services
- Recovery and financial consolidation of the energy sector
- Fostering innovation and competitiveness, foreign direct investment and domestic investment
- Integrated water management
- Integrated land management

• Financial structural reform

The report integrates the progress achieved through two important transformational processes: the reform of the justice sector, which is designed to strengthen the judiciary system; and the urban renaissance programme, which is aimed at transforming and promoting important features of Albania, with a great focus on upgrading the development centres across the country. The voluntary national review elaborates on Albania's people-centred efforts to leave no one behind by focusing on two important aspects of the theme relevant to building resilient societies: women's empowerment and social inclusion.

To support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Albania has prepared a Sustainable Development Goals baseline report, which indicates that 140 (83 per cent) of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals are directly tied to specific components of the national strategy for development and integration pillars for 2016–2020. The linkages between Albania's policy goals and the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals in the national strategies and policy documents depict 134 targets (79 per cent) as being linked to the specific objectives of the national strategic policy framework. This framework is most harmonized with the targets for Goal 3 (good health and well-being), Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (good jobs and economic growth) and Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), while the least harmonization is with Goal 14 (life below water).

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Albania would require further and substantial commitment and cooperation by all of the relevant stakeholders in the country. Key challenges in this process include the efforts to establish the national vision for the year 2030, particularly in the most relevant policy areas for Albania, the identification of policy gaps and acceleration of action in priority areas, the prioritization of the Goals in the local context and the strengthening of the institutional capacities of all of the key stakeholders engaged in the process, including the monitoring and reporting institutions.

Andorra

[Original: French]

Because of its size, its geographical situation, its economy and its history, the Principality of Andorra is a special case. This first voluntary national review therefore describes certain particular aspects illustrating implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and should be considered as a starting-point illustrating the commitment of the Andorran authorities and Andorran society to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals

Since 2016, the Government has been focusing on ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals at all decision-making levels and on their dissemination in civil society and the public administration. In addition, every activity submitted for approval by the Council of Ministers must be linked to the Goals, which thus become the basis for decisions by the Andorran executive.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also aligned its annual master plan for international cooperation with the Goals. The Andorran private and financial sectors have incorporated Agenda 2030 in their strategies for corporate social accountability to promote sustainable development.

A participatory and inclusive review process

An interministerial team was responsible for drafting the report and emphasis was placed on the compilation of statistical data. National bodies representative of the population were invited to participate in the drafting process.

The Government consulted the public via Internet and conducted a campaign of awareness-raising and information about the voluntary national review. This very positive participation revealed which topics required the most attention, encouraging public involvement with Agenda 2030.

Implementation of the Goals

This first review concentrates on eight Sustainable Development Goals (the six Goals selected by the High-Level Political Forum for 2018 (Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17 plus Goals 4 and 13) which are of particular importance to the Principality. Because the Andorran administration has limited human resources, it was difficult to consider all the Goals. It was therefore decided to focus this report on the Goals concerning the environment, in light of the progress achieved by all sectors. However, it was essential to deal with Goal 4, in view of its cross-cutting effect on the achievement of sustainable development.

The review covers not only public policies but also private sector and civil society initiatives. It describes, inter alia, the action taken by the Ministry of the Environment, Agriculture and Sustainable Development, including the draft legislation on energy transition and climate change, the creation of the Energy and Climate Change Agency, the National Waste Management Plan, the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Strategy for the Atmospheric Environment. It also describes the programme for building rehabilitation. (RENOVA programme).

Our three levels of education are free of charge and accessible to all, which explains the country's strong social cohesion. Education for sustainable development is a key concept of the Andorran education system, which also provides cross-cutting instruction in human rights and democratic citizenship. In addition, the large Andorran network of green schools shows the importance attached to respect for the environment and for biodiversity.

The review process fostered communication between the public and private sectors and sharing of experience with implementation of Agenda 2030, creating possibilities for future collaboration. For example, the report describes the work of the ActuaTech Foundation, the projects of the Sustainable Development Observatory and the initiatives taken by Andorran banks to promote the Goals.

Conclusions

The voluntary national review highlights Andorra's good practices as well as the challenges facing the country. These include the improvement of statistical data, in view of the growing need for official statistics. In order to meet this need, the Government has approved the 2018–2021 statistical plan, as a basic tool for regulating and streamlining statistical work in Andorra.

The review findings reveal considerable activity and a genuine awareness of the Goals at all levels. This first review should be viewed as an initial report on activities to implement Agenda 2030 that will promote its greater integration in future national policies.

Armenia

[Original: English]

Armenia will present its first voluntary national review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2018.

The voluntary national review presents the progress and experience gained by Armenia so far during the nationalization and implementation process of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. It also aims to deliver and reflect on political, legal, practical and behavioural advantages, as well as obstacles and challenges, in Armenia's daily life regarding the implementation of the Goals. Undoubtedly, the process confirms the cross-cutting and broad-ranging nature of the exercise, which will most probably go beyond 2030 and require concerted efforts and commitment at both the national and international levels.

The voluntary national review will reflect on the evolution of the build-up in Armenia towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals since 2015.

The main messages of the voluntary national review are as follows:

- The Government of Armenia reconfirms its adherence to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals agreed at the milestone United Nations summit held in 2015, when the international community collectively pledged that "no one will be left behind".
- The Government of Armenia approaches the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as one of the important instruments of delivering the all-encompassing internal reforms initiated in Armenia.
- Since 2015, the country has actively worked on creating the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as a matter of institutional and systemic approach towards their implementation (through the National Council on Sustainable Development under the Prime Minister, the inter-agency task force for the nationalization of the Goals, and the Armenia national Sustainable Development Goals innovation lab: an innovation platform to support the implementation of the Goals at the country level, and an innovation model that is the first of its kind in the world, in which the national Government and the United Nations are joining forces to establish a joint platform to support the acceleration and implementation of the Goals in a country). Global metadata of relevant documentation on all indicators have been developed by the National Statistical Service, which will help to assess the current state of affairs with regard to the Goals.
- Within the process of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Armenia, the country actively and successfully cooperates with its international partners, the United Nations first and foremost (through the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support mission, the Armenia national Sustainable Development Goals innovation lab and the Global Pulse initiative), as well as a wide range of international development organizations and leading technological and innovation centres from across the world (such as the Stanford University Change Labs and the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs) to attract the best available experience and expertise, as well as new and innovative instruments for financing the implementation of the Goals.

The voluntary national review structurally reflects:

- The rationale for making it part, and an important instrument, of the internal reforms initiated in Armenia.
- The adoption of the decisions and the development of the infrastructure necessary for the efficient implementation of the Goals in Armenia.
- The success story of the cooperation with the United Nations and other international partners in developing the most relevant and state-of-the-art instruments and innovation platforms for the implementation of the Goals.
- The initial work already accomplished by the Government towards determining the state of play vis-à-vis the Goals, targets and indicators, the nationalization of the Goals and the adoption of a national road map for the implementation of the Goals in Armenia.

The voluntary national review makes reference to the topic of the 2018 high-level political forum and to the set of specific Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed in depth, namely Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. Reference to the remaining Goals is also covered in the report.

This first review of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is a starting point for a regular, inclusive and continuous process that will guide our future activities in this regard. Among other things, it should strengthen cooperation between all stakeholders of the process and improve the accountability of the State institutions to Armenian society.

Australia

[Original: English]

The Sustainable Development Goals reflect Australia's values and belief in a "fair go".

The Sustainable Development Goals reflect things that Australians value highly and seek to protect, like a healthy environment, access to opportunity and services, human rights, inclusive economies, diverse and supportive communities and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage. Our support for political, economic and religious freedoms, liberal democracy, the rule of law, equality and mutual respect underpin a strong, fair and cohesive society.

Core to the Australian understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals is the Australian value of a "fair go". Like "leaving no one behind", it is a call to action for fairness, justice and equality of opportunity.

This is a "whole of Australia" endeavour, across the whole agenda.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is not just for and about government initiatives and activity: it also involves the business sector, civil society, academia, communities, families and individuals. Australians are already contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through their work in the care economy, by volunteering, by preserving the natural environment and through their everyday activity. Australia's youth play a crucial role, given their potential to deliver on the Goals into the future and their stake in the realization of the Goals.

Australia is committed to the 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

Australia is committed to the Sustainable Development Goals as a universal, global undertaking to end extreme poverty and ensure the peace and well-being of people across the world. The *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* highlights Australia's responsibility to contribute to global efforts to reduce poverty, alleviate suffering and promote sustainable development.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is in Australia's interests: it will contribute to lasting global prosperity, productivity and stability. The Goals are consistent with Australian Government priorities and long-standing efforts across a range of sectors. Likewise, the emphasis in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on issues like trade and infrastructure investment are in line with Australia's approach to driving growth and prosperity.

Our development assistance supports efforts to build a stable and prosperous world, with a focus on infrastructure, trade facilitation and international competitiveness; agriculture, fisheries and water; effective governance; education and health; building resilience; and gender equality.

Our response to the Sustainable Development Goals is shaped by our environment, governance systems, institutions, economy and society.

Australia is a constitutional, democratic federation of states and territories sharing governance and regulatory responsibilities with the national level of government. Local governments play a vital role in local services and regulation. There is coordination and collaboration between all levels of government, supported by a range of existing institutions and processes that ensure accountability and transparency.

The Australian Government has adopted an approach to the Sustainable Development Goals that is appropriate for our national circumstances, with government policy responsibilities and priorities devolved to the relevant agency and level. Other sectors, including Australia's universities, businesses and civil society, are making substantial efforts to raise awareness, form partnerships and address the risks and opportunities inherent in the 2030 Agenda.

The Sustainable Development Goals contain long-standing, complex policy challenges with no simple solutions. They require a joint effort.

Australia has long recognized the role of sustainable development in ensuring the well-being of the country and its people. Government legislation, regulation and policy already drives us towards many of the environmental, social and economic outcomes enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals. As approaches and circumstances evolve, the Goals provide a framework through which governments, businesses, organizations and individuals can conceive of a problem or objective and devise collective action through partnership to drive progress.

Australia's economic success, reflected in 26 years of uninterrupted economic growth, is a product of broad-scale economic, industrial and trade-related reforms. But we continue to grapple with difficult long-standing policy challenges, such as improving health, economic, justice and well-being outcomes for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. And we will need to address ongoing or evolving ones, such as assisting workers through transitions related to technological and industrial change.

We have substantial expertise, innovation and experience to share.

Australians are innovators. We have a highly educated, vibrant and engaged population, shaped by world-class institutions. We have skills, experience and knowledge that can help deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and have built partnerships across sectors and borders to address them. We have contributed our

expertise to the development of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and are sharing technology to help others to develop the data to track and report.

Bahamas

[Original: English]

Introduction

The Bahamas is a low-lying, small island, archipelagic developing State. The country has enjoyed the peaceful transition of Government within its parliamentary democracy over its 45 years as an independent country. The economy, driven by the twin pillars of tourism and financial services, has been generally good, delivering a high quality of life for many. Nevertheless, there are some important negative trends that suggest that many have been left behind as the country has progressed.

Youth unemployment, for example, has remained high, rising to as much as 30 per cent in 2015. Some 13 per cent of the population lives in poverty, of whom 25 per cent are children between the ages of 5 and 14 years. Key industries are not producing enough growth to drive sufficient employment expansion. Challenges prevail in both the public education and health-care systems, leading to less than optimal results. The country is experiencing serious infrastructure challenges leading to marked uneven development. Public institutions require strengthening. Finally, like so many small island developing States, the country's greatest threat is its vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise.

Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development plan

In 2014, the Bahamas began the process of developing a 25-year national development plan, entitled "Vision 2040". Recognizing the synergies between the national development plan and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Government of the Bahamas ensured that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was localized into its national development planning process, thereby providing a road map for the implementation of the Goals.

Institutional arrangements

The national process for preparing the review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Bahamas is currently guided by a collaboration between the Economic Development and Planning Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, it is recognized that these institutional arrangements must be strengthened and formalized to ensure that all segments of society are more involved in, and take ownership of, the Sustainable Development Goals.

Leaving no one behind

Strengthening the resilience of groups and communities that are marginalized or have not benefited sufficiently from the success of the country is a key goal of the recommendations of the implementation framework of the Sustainable Development Goals through the national development plan. These programmes must consider the special issues of the elderly, youth at risk and the particular but different challenges for both men and women, as well as the geographical disparities within the country. For this reason, the Government, in collaboration with civil society, academia and the private sector, has created a special zone for a traditionally marginalized region known as the "over the hill community" as a pilot for a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy focusing on social and economic empowerment, rejuvenation,

smart and green technology and programmes that are focused on youth and the elderly. This project will be replicated throughout the country.

Areas where support is needed for finance, capacity-building, technology and partnerships

The Bahamas recognizes that in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the country will also need strong institutions and access to the necessary resources. Notwithstanding the high per capita gross domestic product of the country, the Bahamas remains a vulnerable, developing country. The Government continues to take steps to strengthen its public institutions, including the introduction of a new programme to strengthen its financial and budgetary management systems, programme delivery capacity and the development of a national statistical system. Strengthening the country's statistical capacity for the production of high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data is particularly critical to support effective policymaking and decision-making and to ensure the continuous review of the country's progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusion

The Bahamas understands that meaningful sustainable development is critical for its very survival. The Bahamas is therefore fully committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The global goals are consistent with and are fully integrated into the country's national development plan framework, Vision 2040.

The Bahamas is pleased to present its national voluntary report at the 2018 high-level political forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, to showcase the work carried out towards meaningful development for our citizens and residents and also to learn from the experiences of the other 46 countries presenting in 2018.

Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]

The development process in Bahrain has been under way for decades. The pace of development has accelerated thanks to the comprehensive approach to development taken by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Economic Vision 2030. The aim of that approach, which is founded on sustainability, competitiveness and justice, is to double real household income by 2030. Under the leadership of the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and with the support of the Deputy Supreme Commander and Deputy Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Government has devoted considerable attention to economic, human, infrastructure and urban development, thereby achieving the Millennium Development Goals and laying sound foundations for sustainable development.

Achievements

- None of the population lives in extreme poverty.
- Average annual economic growth over the past decade was 32 per cent and average gross domestic product per capita was approximately $22,000.
- Spending on health services, education and social protection is greater than 35% of total expenditure.

- Basic education is free and compulsory, and the net enrolment rate for the primary and secondary levels stands at 100 per cent and 86.4 per cent, respectively, meaning that illiteracy has been eradicated. The kindergarten enrolment rate is 82 per cent.

- Health care and medications are free. The maternal mortality rate has declined to 28.6 deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to the global average of 226 per 100,000 live births, while the under-5 mortality rate has declined to 9 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to the global average of 44 per 1,000 live births.

- The Constitution enshrines the equality of men and women. At the urging of the Supreme Council for Women, equal opportunity committees have been established and budgets aimed at achieving that aim have been adopted. Bahraini women hold 55 per cent of all supervisory positions and make up 53 per cent of the government sector and 33 per cent of the private sector.

- The private sector is a strategic development partner. It provides equal employment opportunities and high wages, and that has helped to bring down unemployment to approximately 4 per cent.

- Some 65 per cent of the population have taken advantage of public housing services and five sustainable cities are now under construction.

- The entire population has access to safe drinking water, sewerage systems and clean energy.

- The labour fund (*Tamkin*) provides small- and medium-sized companies with the skills needed to succeed. It has pumped over $2.5 billion into more than 47,000 enterprises and helped to train more than 120,000 individuals, including women, youth and persons with disabilities.

Key national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

PEOPLE

(1) Empower Bahrainis, in order to enable them to contribute to the development process, and improve living standards, particularly for the neediest. (2) Reduce inequality in all its forms and achieve gender equality. (3) Disseminate healthy diet and lifestyle patterns. (4) Ensure that services continue to be affordable. (5) Promote education, research, innovation and the values of citizenship and productive work.

PLANET

(1) Implement a sustainable natural-resource strategy by promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns. (2) Develop sustainable economic and urban policies. (3) Contribute to the response to climate change and its effects on Bahrain. (4) Take make measures to conserve water and energy.

PROSPERITY

(1) Establish a strong and diversified economy and a stable financial and monetary system, and ensure that the infrastructure needed for sustainable development is in place. (2) Adopt sustainable policies that achieve economic, social and technological progress. (3) Promote economic diversification and support high-potential small and medium enterprises that create good jobs for Bahrainis. (4) Adopt policies that safeguard the rights of migrant workers and put in place a legislative framework that guarantees protection and rights for all.

PEACE & JUSTICE

(1) Promote security and stability by applying the principle of the rule of law to all.
(2) Achieve justice and strengthen democracy and international relations.
(3) Improve the effectiveness and capacity of government institutions.

No one left behind in the development process

The Constitution and public policies guarantee universal access to basic services. Government and civil society programmes provide support to abused women, persons with disabilities and persons with limited income. Public and social services are available to migrant workers, who are given health insurance and shelter. In addition, they are protected against arbitrary dismissal. The flexible work programme frees migrant workers from the sponsorship (*kafalah*) scheme and enables them to obtain work without a having a sponsor. Moreover, several measures have been taken to safeguard the rights of migrant workers and combat human trafficking.

Regional integration and international activity

Bahrain is a member of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf. Regional integration is a strategic imperative that is vital to maintaining the security and stability of Bahrain.

Bahrain provides humanitarian assistance to mitigate the effects of disasters and provide more than 600,000 permanent jobs for migrant workers. In 2017, migrant workers remitted 927 million Bahraini dinars ($2.5 billion). Their remittances contributed to the development of their countries and helped their families to overcome poverty.

Implementation mechanism

The Government, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, has developed a set of action plans to realize the Sustainable Development Goals. The current plan comprises six strategic pillars that are aligned with key aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals and includes some 78% of the targets established for the Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment will continue in future plans.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

National Information Committee-organized consultation sessions and workshops

106 NGOs
220 participants

88 private firms
100 participants

32 academic, parliamentary & other interested parties
90 participants

Preparation of the report

The National Information Committee, which is chaired by the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, monitors the objectives and indicators associated with the Sustainable Development Goals and ensures that the Government's plans of action are aligned therewith. In addition, the Committee identifies programmes and policies that can help achieve those objectives and it assess the progress made to that end. The National Information Committee, with the support of the Coordinating Committee, oversaw the drafting of the national report, which was prepared by a panel that collected information and data collection from sectoral and national reports submitted to international organizations. The outcomes of the consultative workshops that were organized were taken into account in the preparation of the report.

Harmonizing the Government plan of action with the Sustainable Development Goals

Current and future challenges

As a small developing island State, Bahrain faces the following challenges:

- Climate change threatens water and agricultural resources, biodiversity, coastal installations, infrastructure and health. Responding to those threats requires transfer and adaptation of appropriate green technologies, adequate funding, national capacity-building and raising community awareness.
- Maintaining a sustainable, thriving economy in order to provide an attractive environment for investment and create rewarding jobs for Bahrainis.
- Increase the use of evidence-based national statistics, in order to improve the quality and increase the transparency of such statistics, so that they can be used for regular monitoring of sustainable development indicators.
- Address extremism, terrorism and conflicts and ensure that they do not affect Bahraini society, with a view to maintaining societal cohesion and unity and preserving national development gains.

Bahrain reaffirms its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to ensure the well-being of its citizens and the sustainability of resources for future generations.

Benin

[Original: French]

In 2018, following prioritization of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, Benin proceeded to align all planning documents with the priority targets.

For example, we aligned the Government Action Programme, the National Development Plan and its first quadrennial operational framework, and the Programme of Growth for Sustainable Development with the priority targets of the Goals. An application was developed to improve the linkage between planning, budgeting and the Goals. It measures the degree to which the Ministries' activities, as shown by their annual work plans, are responsive to the Goals. It is hoped that this exercise will gradually encourage the Ministries to focus their efforts on Goal-oriented development.

Similarly, we are in the process of costing the priority targets of the Goals. Our consistently inclusive method was to involve all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the private sector and academia, local communities and technical and financial partners. For each priority target, we identified bottlenecks, accelerators and the intervention package. Intervention packages are evaluated in order to calculate their implementation costs.

The implementation framework was thus strengthened and clarified. In order to facilitate coordination of the various interventions for the Goals, we mapped out the technical and financial partners and civil society organizations. This mapping identified the priority targets of concern to a number of partners, requiring considerable coordination, and priority targets involving few partners that need more attention.

Lastly, in order to improve financing of the Goals, the Government of Benin decided to conduct a development financing evaluation to facilitate the creation of an integrated resource mobilization framework. In addition, the Government is taking advantage of this High-Level Political Forum focusing on resilience to adopt two important documents concerning environment and climate financing: a country programme document for the Green Climate Fund to coordinate major initiatives in favour of the environment and climate, and a national policy document on climate change.

As regards the Goals for discussion at the 2018 Forum, Benin has made some progress and, most importantly, has taken important decisions. In the case of Goal 6, the proportion of Beninese households with access to clean water increased to 45 per cent and 55 per cent in rural and urban areas, respectively; the Government is aiming to reach 100 per cent by 2021 (i.e. ten years ahead of the Agenda 2030 target). Regarding Goal 7, the rate of electrification is hampered by limited national supply. In order to remedy this, Benin's goal for 2021 is to achieve energy self-sufficiency, with a good energy mix in which renewable energy occupies an important place. With regard to Goal 11, accelerated urbanization poses several problems. There is a rainwater purification programme for Cotonou, for which resources estimated at 476 million dollars have been mobilized. This will be followed by asphalting to improve roadways in all Benin's cities. In connection with Goal 12, the Government has sent a strong signal by enacting legislation prohibiting the production, import, marketing and use of non-biodegradable plastic bags. Lastly, concerning Goal 15, Benin has adopted a policy note on land degradation neutrality and an action plan on sustainable land and forest management.

At this stage of operationalization of the Goals, the President of the Republic, Patrice Talon, and his Government affirm that Benin is poised to make more important and more remarkable progress in implementing the Goals.

Bhutan

[Original: English]

Guided by the development philosophy of gross national happiness, Bhutan is committed to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Bhutan will graduate from the least developed country category upon the completion of its twelfth five-year plan period (2018–2023). The twelfth plan will be Bhutan's transition plan to non-least developed country status, during which concerted national efforts will continue towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Bhutan is well on track in implementing the Goals. Having made great progress in its socioeconomic development, the incidence of income poverty reduced from 23.2 per cent in 2007 to 8.2 per cent in 2017, while multidimensional poverty fell from 12.7 per cent in 2012 to 5.8 per cent in 2017. Income inequality, on average, has remained at a minimal level, and the economy has grown at an average of 7.5 per cent along with structural changes. The share of industry in total gross domestic product (GDP) increased to 41.5 per cent in 2016 from 11.5 per cent in 1980, and the service sector contributed about 42 per cent of total GDP. Bhutan's population today is increasingly urbanized, young and educated, with half the population under 28 years old and unemployment under 2.5 per cent.

Despite the progress made, Bhutan is confronted with the following challenges in its development efforts:

- In ensuring that no one is left behind, Bhutan faces last mile challenges. In the twelfth five-year plan, Bhutan aims to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and address the needs of vulnerable groups. It endeavours to reduce income and multidimensional poverty to less than 5 per cent. The Gini coefficient increased slightly to 0.38 in 2017 from 0.36 in 2012, indicating a need to assess existing policies and programmes. Furthermore, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups through targeted interventions is a priority. Promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls has been identified as one of the 16 national key result areas. Fourteen different vulnerable groups have been identified through a vulnerability baseline assessment. Bhutan is currently in the process of drafting the national disability policy and national gender equality policy.

- Enhancing productive capacity to develop economic resilience is vital to sustainable graduation and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. While the economy has grown steadily over the years, hydropower remains the major contributor to the economy, and efforts to optimally tap the potential of this resource continues. Bhutan aims to diversify investments into tourism, organic agriculture, mining and cottage and small industries, with the objective of increasing the share of national revenue from non-hydro sectors to over 75 per cent and attracting approximately 10 billion ngultrum ($150 million) in foreign direct investment. Although the overall unemployment is low, youth unemployment remains high, at 11 per cent. Initiatives will be undertaken to establish an "entrepreneurship ecosystem" so as to provide a platform for innovation to generate green jobs through the participation of the corporate and private sectors.

- Bhutan aims to further develop its human capital and needs to take advantage of its demographic dividend. While tremendous progress has been made in education, with school enrolment at nearly 100 per cent, initiatives to improve

the quality of education, including learning outcomes, inculcate an innovative and creative mindset and enhance employability will be undertaken.

- Sustainable graduation and the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda are contingent on the availability of adequate and timely resources. This necessitates a financing needs assessment to develop a resource mobilization strategy for the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Bhutan will explore both domestic and external financing mechanisms. Measures to increase domestic revenues through expansion of the tax base and improvement in revenue collection systems will be pursued. Given its effective use of official development assistance and its relations with international development partners, Bhutan will further explore innovative financing opportunities with multilateral and bilateral partners. Foreign direct investment and public-private partnerships will be key financing measures, and efforts to improve the ease of doing business are ongoing. In view of Bhutan's commitment to conservation, international green financing opportunities will also be explored.

Bhutan looks forward to receiving the support of the international community to ensure that the hard-earned developmental gains are not derailed by the perils of climate change and natural disasters, and that the institutional capacity, including human resources, are in place.

Cabo Verde

[Original: English]

The Strategic Sustainable Development Plan: the vehicle for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in Cabo Verde

Ensuring alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and with universal principles of human rights, the Strategic Sustainable Development Plan 2017–2021 constitutes the main vehicle for Cabo Verde to fulfil the sustainable development agenda. As such, the collaboration of cooperation agencies and local and international partners is vital for the financing of the Plan.

Investments in good governance, gender equality and human rights, reproductive health and the development of human capital have been key for Cabo Verde's development achievement.

Cabo Verde graduated to the status of middle-income country in 2007 thanks to its investments in sexual and reproductive health and a particular emphasis on maternal and child health, a key factor in the demographic transition, combined with investments in good governance and in the development of human capital in education, health and volunteer work, which enhanced participation and citizenship.

As a small island developing State, a middle-income country and a highly indebted and vulnerable country, Cabo Verde requires alternative, non-traditional mechanisms and indicators for accessing development financing.

In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Cabo Verde urges the international community to collaborate with small island developing States and middle-income countries in gaining access to financing, using new mechanisms and partnerships that encourage greater public and private financial participation in those economies and the use of methodologies and indicators that go beyond economic growth.

Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals and focus on the most vulnerable groups as a key integrated strategy in order to ensure that no one is left behind

Localization of development management instruments and State reform to reduce inequalities and regional asymmetries, with greater efforts in terms of financing, are required to increase the value of local economies, focus on people and highly vulnerable groups, and promote alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Decentralization is a best practice of integrated policy that contributes towards ensuring that no one is left behind and achieving the Goals at the local level. Municipal strategic sustainable development plans are an example of participation within the framework of local multi-stakeholder platforms and the promotion of the Goals.

Achieving universal and sustainable access to energy, water and sanitation is crucial to sustainable development and to leaving no one behind, and requires considerable support from existing partners

Equitable, universal and sustainable access to energy, water and sanitation is among the greatest challenges for the country and is crucial for the building of its economic, social and environmental resilience, requiring technical and financial partnerships in the development of renewable forms of energy, and with impact in the reduction of tariffs and water losses and improvement of access to water and sanitation.

Investment in the blue economy is an example of integrated policy for Cabo Verde's sustainable development

Valorization of the blue economy is an important vector in Cabo Verde's dynamic integration into the world economic system, contributing to security and the sustainable development of marine resources and improving its tourism sector and shipping services. Investments in the blue economy contribute to inclusive economic growth and the reduction of inequalities, optimizing conditions for the construction of economic, social and environmental resilience as a best practice of integrated policy for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Commitment to the enhancement of the national statistical system and development of global governance indicators

Cabo Verde's international leadership of the Praia Group is a sign of its strong commitment to supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the global level and to strengthening its own statistical system as a condition necessary for operationalizing the principle of "leaving no one behind" and for being able to measure the country's progress towards the Goals. This requires support from the international community to carry out the priorities of the national statistical development strategy for the 2017–2021 period.

Cabo Verde's dynamic insertion in the world economic system

Making Cabo Verde a relevant country in the Mid-Atlantic in economic, security and diplomatic terms and the promotion of freedom and democracy is the main orientation of its development process, which also values the various generations of the Cabo Verdean diaspora community, namely, their contribution to development financing and promotion of the country's image.

Canada

[Original: English]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents Canada and the world with a historic opportunity to positively shape how societies of tomorrow grow and develop sustainably and inclusively to the shared benefit of all. It is an opportunity to build a more prosperous and resilient future in which the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are advanced in a balanced and integrated way, "leaving no one behind".

Canada is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals at home and abroad. As Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in his address to the United Nations in September 2017, "the Sustainable Development Goals are as meaningful in Canada as they are everywhere else in the world".

Canada's voluntary national review underscores the Government's commitment to implementing all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the principles that underpin the 2030 Agenda, including "leaving no one behind". As Canada's first review, the report will take stock of national actions, achievements and challenges and will identify next steps in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a work in progress. While Canada has attained an overall high standard of social and economic development, 3 million Canadians still struggle to satisfy their basic needs. Indigenous peoples, women, youth and the elderly, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit community, newcomers to Canada and persons with disabilities are more likely to face poverty, discrimination and social exclusion.

Canada is responding to these challenges through concrete actions to reduce poverty, advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, narrow the socioeconomic gaps that exist between different groups, foster inclusion and celebrate diversity, and improve equality of opportunity for all.

While Canada has a relatively small population, it also has a large land mass, most of it located in the northern half of the northern hemisphere. These factors contribute to relatively heavier energy and transportation use. To respond to these national circumstances, the Government of Canada is taking firm action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support clean technology and innovation.

Canada's priorities at the global level are aligned with its priorities domestically. In June 2017, Canada announced its feminist international assistance policy, which seeks to eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world. Canada firmly believes that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is the most effective way to achieve this goal and drive progress on all Sustainable Development Goals.

National strategy and coordinating structures

The Government of Canada's policies, programmes and priorities are already well aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. In the 2018 federal budget, Canada allocated new funds to establish a Sustainable Development Goals unit, which will ensure effective 2030 Agenda coordination across federal departments and agencies and with Canadian stakeholders, and to track Canada's progress on the Goals. Federal departments and agencies have been tasked with further examining how their policies and programmes are contributing to the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Canada will mainstream a gender-responsive perspective in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, consistent with its emphasis on gender equality as a cross-cutting priority.

The Government will launch a process in the coming months to develop a national strategy on the 2030 Agenda through collaboration with all levels of government, indigenous peoples, civil society and the private sector. Data is key to developing solutions to challenges facing the implementation of this agenda, to ensure that no one is left behind and to track progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. As such, the report includes validated Canadian data for the global indicator framework for the Goals.

Partnerships

Canada recognizes that innovative, multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda, including to mobilize additional sources of capital in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Across Canada, governments, organizations and individuals are already answering the 2030 Agenda's call to action and convening new partnerships to respond in new ways to the challenges we face collectively. Going forward, the Government of Canada will strengthen efforts to bring together all segments of society in Canada around the Goals, including in the development of the national strategy. Canada will also continue to work with its domestic and international partners to foster new and innovative solutions to realize this historic and transformative Agenda.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

In 2016, Colombia presented its first voluntary national review. A year after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the country had already made progress in various areas that it was able to share with other countries, especially in terms of establishing readiness. The early incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the national development plan for 2010–2014 adopted by the national Government and in the local development plans for 2016–2019 adopted by the subnational governments, the creation of a cross-sectoral institutional framework to lead the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the country and the alignment of the peace negotiations with the 2030 Agenda were the main milestones presented in the first review.

Now, two years on, the country's efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals merit a second review. The signing of the peace agreement marks a new era in which the building of a stable and sustainable peace will enable Colombian society to focus on achieving genuine sustainable development. To advance in that direction, the Government has drafted a national policy, which is set out in National Economic and Social Policy Council document No. 3918 entitled "Strategy for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Colombia". The document presents the vision for the country for 2030 and establishes a follow-up framework with national indicators, measurable targets, institutional responsibilities and a prioritization and regionalization exercise that includes a set of benchmark targets designed to stimulate progress in the other targets of each Sustainable Development Goal. The document also includes a plan to improve statistical data and a territorial strategy designed to maximize ownership and the utility of the Sustainable Development Goals in the transformation of territorial realities while respecting local autonomies and priorities. Lastly, it includes a strategy for dialogue and the fostering of partnerships with non-governmental actors which is

aimed at institutionalizing dialogue and consolidating the 2030 Agenda as an agenda of the country and of all Colombians.

Progress has also been made in developing other initiatives to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in a cross-cutting manner. A webpage was created (www.ods.gov.co) which gives Colombians access to up-to-date information in the form of national indicators of the country's progress towards achieving the goals set and enables them to exercise social control. Measures have been developed to track the resources of the country's various public entities and their allocation to each Sustainable Development Goal as a starting point for developing a financing strategy. In addition, a joint initiative is being developed with the private sector so that companies can provide information to increase the visibility of their efforts and contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals as a complement to the official information.

In accordance with the guidelines established by the United Nations General Assembly on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, this report includes the progress made by Colombia under Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15. It also includes the public policy framework designed to respond to the country's priorities and challenges in these areas as well as the progress and trends in the national indicators established to monitor the 2030 Agenda. The results are analysed from a gender perspective and with special emphasis on the groups and communities that need the most attention, with the aim of leaving no one behind. Also included are the outcomes of a series of regional dialogues held in different parts of the country where there are particular challenges and where successful experiences have been identified which are contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and which need to be made visible, shared and leveraged. These experiences are based on partnerships (Sustainable Development Goal 17) among the different levels of government, civil society, communities and other actors which have been empowered to transform local realities to achieve sustainable development focused on each of these five Sustainable Development Goals.

Lastly, the review highlights the challenges still facing the country which need to be addressed to ensure effective achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Thus, the current Government is laying the foundations so that future leaders can continue building on the progress made. The goal for 2030 is to have established a country that is at peace and has a productive sustainable economy that offers opportunities for development and a decent standard of living for all inhabitants without distinction.

Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]

Adopted on 25 September 2015 at the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, Agenda 2030 establishes 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with 169 targets and 232 indicators. These ambitious Goals represent a profoundly innovative concept of development.

The Congo officially launched efforts to attain the Goals on 12 December 2016 and this launch was followed by the creation of a road map with the following focus: (a) ownership, contextualization and integration of the Goals in national development policies and plans; (b) creation of a mechanism for coordination and monitoring/evaluation; and (c) capacity-building for stakeholders involved in monitoring these Goals.

The contextualization phase was assisted by the United Nations Development Programme and the sectoral ministries. This made it possible to measure the extent to

which national policies are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and to identify the priority Goals for the Congo.

For the alignment exercise, analytics of the impact of regulation and a prioritization matrix were used. The analytical tool reviews the existing national development plans and sectoral strategies. It provides a representative picture of a country's degree of alignment with Agenda 2030 by analysing shortcomings consisting of targets not included in such development plans and sectoral strategies. In addition, it identifies the interconnections between targets and sectors in which interventions may have repercussions on several Goals (accelerator effect).

Using these two tools, the Congo prioritized: (a) 14 Sustainable Development Goals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16; (b) 74 targets, of which 54 are considered to have an accelerator effect; and (c) 113 indicators. These will be integrated in national development plans, starting with the 2018–2022 National Development Plan that is being finalized.

In endorsing Agenda 2030, the Congo promises that no one will be left behind. The Government is therefore committed to doing everything possible to promote inclusive sustainable development, so as to fully benefit all strata of society, including the most vulnerable. This requires extensive campaigns to publicize the Goals.

For the period from 2018 to 2022, Agenda 2030 will be financed under the National Development Plan. This Plan incorporates in its structure the goals set in this global initiative. It should be noted that an action plan to implement the Goals is being formulated and will provide a rough estimate of post-Plan costs.

This new global programme is taking shape in a period marked by scarcity of financial resources, due mainly to declining demand for oil on international markets. This decline, which commenced in 2014, has caused a drop in oil prices that has undermined the economies of States whose revenue is mainly in foreign currency. The Congo is one of the countries affected by this crisis. For example, its investment budget has shrunk considerably. It amounted to 264 billion CFA francs in 2018, which is a reduction of 86.79 per cent compared with the figure of 1,997.9 billion CFA francs for 2014. In this context, mobilization of financing for the efficacious and efficient operationalization of the Goals will inevitably be one of the main challenges facing the Congo. It is therefore urgently necessary to create and consolidate strategic partnerships linked to the sustainability goals, in order to enhance the capacity of the Congo to implement and monitor these goals.

In order to monitor these contextualized global goals, an institutional framework has been created consisting of a Steering Committee, with responsibility including monitoring of the National Development Plan, a Technical Coordinating Body and Operational Units.

Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]

The Dominican Republic has made significant progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but faces challenges in overcoming economic, social, environmental, institutional and policy gaps.

The country is firmly committed to the 2030 Agenda and has achieved an alignment rate of 72 per cent between the Sustainable Development Goals and its national development agenda.

The Dominican Republic has maintained robust economic growth at rates higher than those in other countries in the region. Since the 1990s, the country's gross

domestic product has grown by an average of more than 5 per cent per year, and by an annual average of more than 6.5 per cent over the last four years. Poverty levels have fallen from 40 per cent in 2003 to 25.5 per cent for monetary poverty and 21 per cent for multidimensional poverty. Over the last decade, per capita income has increased from US $4,196 to US $7,112, making the country an upper-middle-income economy. However, better results and more effective public policies are needed to address structural problems in the areas of employment, gender inequalities and the quality of public services.

Unemployment has fallen from 7.7 per cent in 2014 to 5.1 per cent in 2017. Informal labour remains high and unemployment affects young people, women and poor households in particular. The national employment policy needs to focus on those populations.

Tourism, which is one of the main economic sectors and the country's main source of income, has grown steadily by 10.6 per cent over the last four years. However, the sector does need to be diversified. The agricultural and agro-industrial sectors produce more than 85 per cent of local consumption. By contrast, manufacturing has shrunk, despite public policies aimed at expanding access to credit for small-scale industrial enterprises. The environmental impacts of tourism are not well known and indicators need to be developed to show the sustainability of activities. Manufacturing accounts for less than 14 per cent of gross domestic product and employment in that sector is falling. Official statistics do not include data on small-scale industrial enterprises. Indicators are needed to allow for improved policies.

Almost 90 per cent of the population has access to a mobile telephone but only 50 per cent has access to the Internet and just 27 per cent has access to a personal computer or tablet.

There are fewer people living in slums, but 12.1 per cent of the population still lives in informal settlements or inadequate housing. These homes are vulnerable to the extreme weather events which affect the country frequently. One challenge lies in ensuring systematic monitoring of housing and the impact of disasters with a view to designing policies to create resilience.

Efforts are starting to be made to promote sustainable production and consumption. The country has a good legal framework, but it lacks indicators to support policies.

Progress has been made towards establishing a transparent State, but the road to achieving satisfactory levels of transparency, a strong institutional framework and an effective justice system is long. Crime and homicide rates have risen in recent years. Indicators show barriers to access to justice and evidence of corruption and mistrust in institutions.

The fiscal constraint is a barrier to the 2030 Agenda. The tax burden represents 14 per cent of the country's gross domestic product, while official development assistance accounts for less than 0.1 per cent. In 2017, public sector debt stood at 48 per cent of gross domestic product. Foreign direct investment fluctuates between 3 and 4 per cent of gross domestic product while remittances account for 8 per cent.

Progress has been made in incorporating international commitments into national plans, but stronger linkages are needed between planning and public budgets. There is also a lack of sustainable development indicators, particularly environmental ones.

The Government is working on identifying policy combinations and objectives to boost synergies and accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda through five goals: (a) reducing multidimensional poverty; (b) increasing competitiveness and decent

work; (c) promoting sustainable consumption and production; (d) increasing resilience to climate change and other risks; and (f) achieving robust and inclusive State institutions.

The voluntary national report focuses on Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 3, and reviews current policies and gaps.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]

As part of its commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Ecuador will present its first voluntary national review in 2018. The review gathers inputs from the Government, the private sector, academia, civil society and the local authorities on the basis of joint responsibility and collective commitment to work together to promote sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection, and to combat inequalities and discrimination. Ecuador aims to leave no one behind and to ensure benefits for all. The contributions are the result of consultations held with these actors at the national level on the progress made and challenges faced in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals as well as other inputs reflecting efforts to achieve sustainable development.

MILESTONES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ECUADOR

September 2015
Ecuador and the States members of the United Nations adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals
July 2017
National Assembly decides to adopt the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a mandatory reference in the work of the National Assembly and its committees
September 2017
Adoption of the national development plan entitled "Toda Una Vida 2017-2021"** with components, goals and actions in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
April 2018
By Executive Decree No. 371, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is declared as a policy of the national Government
April - May 2018
Participatory consultations held to analyse the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Ecuador
July 2018
Ecuador will present its first voluntary national review at the high-level forum on sustainable development

* Commits all social actors to work together to promote sustained economic growth and social development, protect the environment and combat inequalities and discrimination.
** Emphasizes the guarantee of constitutional rights and the development of persons throughout the life cycle.

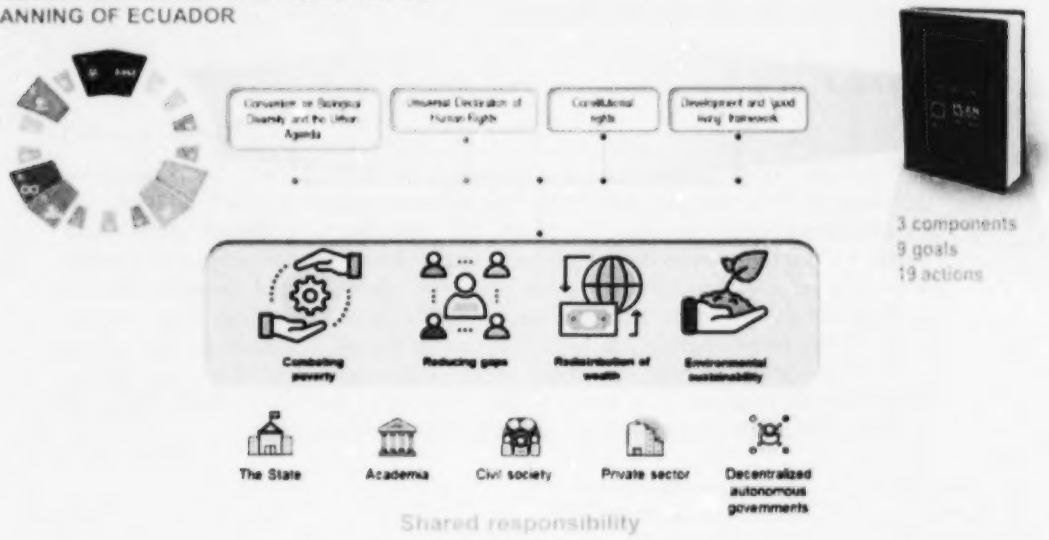
Source: National Ministry of Planning and Development.

The national development plan entitled "Toda una Vida 2017–2021" ("An entire lifetime") is the road map for national planning and incorporates innovative elements to guarantee the rights and development of individuals throughout the life cycle. For example, the focus on multi-stakeholder democratic dialogue in the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies is without a doubt an innovation in the efforts to promote national sustainable development and transparent governance.

Ecuador has established mechanisms to ensure the alignment, follow-up and evaluation of its planning in accordance with the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Executive Decree No. 371, signed by President Lenín Moreno in April 2018, declares that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a public policy of the

national Government, which will work to achieve the Goals and targets and to align national planning and development with the 2030 Agenda.

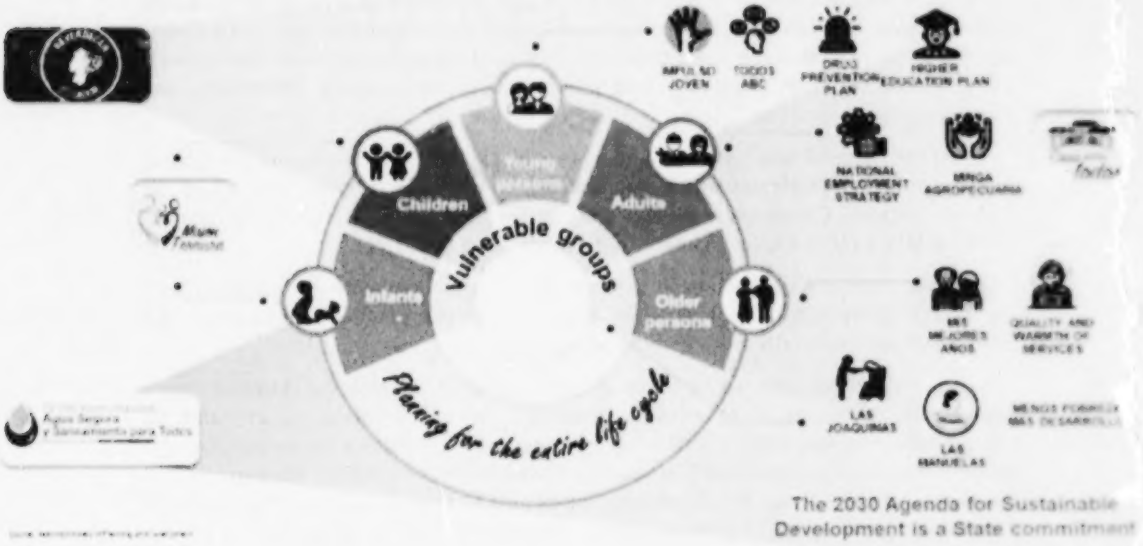
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE NATIONAL PLANNING OF ECUADOR



To achieve national goals and targets, a range of initiatives [1] have been implemented, referred to as flagship measures, to guide national planning towards the gradual achievement of the 2030 Agenda and to provide possible solutions to the problems facing Ecuadorians.

[1] See glossary of public policies at the end of this report.

Flagship measures to achieve main goals



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a State commitment

PARTICIPATORY CONSULTATIONS TO ANALYSE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

OBJETIVOS DE DESARROLLO SOSTENIBLE

Goals analysed

1. End poverty
6. Safe drinking water and sanitation
7. Renewable energy
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption
15. Terrestrial flora and fauna
17. Sustainable partnerships for development

Consultations on national progress made and challenges faced by Ecuador in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda

Ecuador is focusing its efforts on ending poverty (Goal 1) in all its forms through actions to assist the most vulnerable populations by creating opportunities and closing gaps in access to social services. The country's multidimensional poverty rate, which measures gaps in education, employment and social security, health, food

and water, living conditions, housing and healthy environment, stood at 36.2 per cent in 2015 and is expected to come down to 27.4 per cent by 2021.

Ensuring universal access to water (Goal 6) is a priority for the Government of Ecuador, which is implementing a strategy on safe water and sanitation for all which includes prioritization criteria established to ensure the proper management of basic sanitation services through strengthened institutional capacities at the different levels of government and improved internal processes to achieve efficiency and sustainability of services.

At the national level, work is under way to establish an urban agenda that takes into account the implementation plan for the New Urban Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016 (Goal 11).

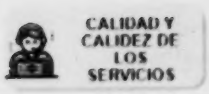
Concrete measures have been implemented to promote national production with social and environmental responsibility (Goal 12), combat planned obsolescence and promote environmentally responsible consumption.

The priority given to environmental issues (Goal 15) is reflected in the country's sustainable management of natural resources, its conservation efforts and its exploitation and equitable distribution of the benefits of those resources through programmes such as Greening Ecuador, the Comprehensive Amazon Programme and the Forest Partners Programme, which have helped to keep more than 16 per cent of the national territory under conservation or environmental management.

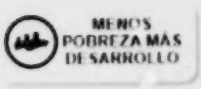
The Government is working to combat corruption and improve public service delivery through strategies such as one on the quality and warmth of public services in order to achieve a State that is more connected to society (Goal 17).

Glossary of Government programmes and initiatives

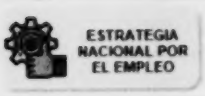
Agua Segura para Todos	The Inter-Agency Committee on Safe Water and Sanitation for All. Established to ensure integrated management of water resources, including conservation, efficient use and proper treatment, and guarantee access, quality and quantity
Misión Ternura	A programme to promote the full development of children under five years of age with emphasis on the first 1,000 days of life through the development and implementation of public policy mechanisms and inter-agency coordination.
IMPULSO JOVEN	A programme to motivate, train, strengthen, empower and protect young Ecuadorians, improve their skills and create greater opportunities for them.
TODOS ABC	A literacy campaign launched to improve the capacities of the population and provide educational opportunities for young persons and adults without qualifications, with special attention given to rural areas.
PREVENCIÓN DE DROGAS	A plan to ensure comprehensive drug prevention and control and to stop, reduce and mitigate the health, economic, social and personal safety consequences of drug use.
EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR	A plan to strengthen and expand the system of higher education institutions, universities and technical and technological colleges on the basis of the criteria of quality, inclusion and relevance to the country's development needs.



An initiative to improve the quality and warmth of State services, with special attention to priority groups and vulnerable populations.



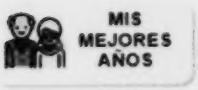
An initiative to reduce extreme income poverty, promote shared responsibilities, create conditions conducive to upward social mobility and strengthen the capacities of new generations (variable human development bond).



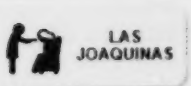
The national employment strategy, developed to promote productive investment, prioritize innovation and network opportunities and generate quality jobs.

A public enterprise that works to guarantee the right to safe and sanitary living conditions and to proper and dignified housing for persons living in extreme poverty.

An agricultural programme to strengthen national production and development which guarantees access to productive resources and markets, facilitates the creation of enterprises and generates decent work in the rural sector.



A programme to protect and ensure the well-being of vulnerable older persons and provide them with a healthy life and decent standard of living.



An initiative to assist women caregivers of persons with severe disabilities or catastrophic illnesses.

A programme to guarantee special attention for persons with disabilities and priority groups by means of comprehensive assistance mechanisms.

Egypt

[Original: English]

- Egypt is committed to progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Egypt's sustainable development strategy, Egypt Vision 2030, is in line with the Goals. The national strategic plan's three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) are based on 10 pillars broadly covering the Goals. The plan provides programmes, policies and measurable indicators in order to put Egypt on the right path towards sustainable development.

- Egypt embarked on a very comprehensive and homegrown economic reform programme that is supported by the international financial institutions, starting in November 2016. The Government of Egypt took very bold and timely measures, as well as overdue reforms, to put the economy on the path towards becoming more stable and resilient. After a challenging year, economic fundamentals are stabilizing, with a reduction in the fiscal deficit, a curb in the rate of inflation, a waning external deficit and an increase in the growth rate of output; all of these have been met with increased confidence from domestic and international investors. The Government is committed to pursuing its agenda of economic reforms to create an enabling environment for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

- Egypt is mindful of the vulnerable groups who are likely to be more adversely affected by stabilization and reform programmes. In order not to leave anyone

behind, the Government of Egypt has scaled up its social protection programmes and has improved their target mechanisms. In addition, the Government is allocating more resources to the more deprived areas to provide better quality public services and infrastructure.

- Egypt is pursuing an ambitious plan to upgrade its infrastructure across all sectors and all regions within the country. The energy sector witnessed a substantial upgrade in its capacity to produce, transport and distribute electricity. Egypt increased its capacity to produce electricity by at least 15 gigawatts of electricity by using very advanced, sustainable and efficient technologies. Indeed, the energy strategy is aimed at increasing the share of renewable energy to 42 per cent by 2035. The Government has also enacted major reforms in the legal framework of its electricity sector, opening the door for increased participation of the private sector and the effective regulatory role of the State. All of these efforts in the energy sector are consistent with Egypt's vision to become the energy hub of the Eastern Mediterranean.

- The Egyptian network of highways witnessed major extensions and improvements. The national highway project is a much-needed project to link distant parts of Egypt beyond the main cities and the Nile Valley in order to create economic opportunities and to expand beyond the narrow valley.

- The growing population, consisting mainly of youth, represents both a challenge and an opportunity. It is a challenge since the Government needs to continuously scale up the country's infrastructure and housing units, especially for low-income groups. This explains Egypt's heavy investment in infrastructure projects, as well as social housing projects. On the other hand, this young, sizeable population will be an asset if these young people obtain adequate quality education and training that prepare them for the fourth industrial revolution.

- Water scarcity within Egypt and regionally is a key challenge for the growing population, especially given that the agricultural sector consumes almost two thirds of the supply of fresh water. Ensuring sustainable water resource management is a matter of high priority for the Government of Egypt.

- Egypt Vision 2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are implemented by engaging all stakeholders. The role of the private sector and civil society is key in the realization of these goals. The inclusivity and transformability aspects of the 2030 Agenda and its national counterpart necessitate the active contribution of the private sector and civil society in the achievement of all the goals. The Government of Egypt realizes this fact and is capitalizing on the positive synergies between the governmental efforts, private sector efforts and civil society efforts to achieve this ambitious agenda.

Greece

[Original: English]

Greece is strongly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as they provide an ambitious and transformative framework for a new, fair and sustainable development path, which ensures a balance between economic growth, social cohesion and justice as well as protection of the environment and of the country's unique ecological wealth. Ensuring that "no one is left behind" is a high political priority for Greece, which is now exiting a period of prolonged economic crisis.

Through an open dialogue within all government units and with a wide array of stakeholders, an in-depth stocktaking and mapping exercise was carried out in 2017

to define the country's starting point. The exercise resulted in the endorsement of the below eight national priorities for adapting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to national needs and circumstances, in line with the recently adopted national growth strategy:

- Fostering competitive, innovative and sustainable economic growth
- Promoting full employment and decent work for all
- Addressing poverty and social exclusion, and providing universal access to quality health-care services
- Reducing social and regional inequalities and ensuring equal opportunities for all
- Providing high-quality and inclusive education
- Strengthening the protection and sustainable management of natural capital as a base for social prosperity and the transition to a low-carbon economy
- Building effective, accountable and transparent institutions
- Enhancing open, participatory, democratic processes and promoting partnerships

The country's first sustainable development strategy dates back to 2002; however, Greece has now adopted a truly strategic approach, anchoring sustainable development at the highest political level and ensuring political ownership. To build a robust, long-lasting institutional mechanism to coordinate national efforts for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Greece has successfully endorsed: (a) a "whole-of-government" approach, with an active operational interministerial coordination network, steered by the General Secretariat of the Government, a key centre-of-government entity; and (b) a "whole-of-society" approach with strong stakeholder engagement in the gap analysis and stocktaking process, enhancing transparency, partnership and accountability.

As detailed in the country's report on the voluntary national review, the unprecedented economic crisis forced a focus towards economic policies that often create divergence rather than contributing to achieving sustainable development. Thus, the country had to balance out through measures for equitable growth by improving the business environment and encouraging investment, promoting the social and solidarity economy, supporting human capital, research and innovation, and fostering sustainability in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and infrastructure.

For the social pillar, and with a particular outlook on regional cohesion, policy priorities have been focused on addressing urgent gaps related to unemployment, in particular for youth and women, social inequalities and the inclusion of immigrants and vulnerable population groups. These have been implemented through a robust social security system, the establishment of a minimum guaranteed income for all, universal access to quality health-care services, a reduced social residential electricity tariff, support for "energy communities" and free access to quality education for everyone at all education levels.

For the environmental pillar, progress has been achieved on all related Sustainable Development Goals. Key national priorities include the shift towards a low-carbon circular economy and improvement in waste reduction, reuse and recycling for creating new jobs and increasing resource efficiency. Firmly committed to the Paris Agreement objectives, Greece is already in a good place to meet its national greenhouse gas reduction targets earlier than 2030. Successes also include the full application of integrated water resources management principles considering both social aspects and ecosystem needs, a significant increase in the penetration of renewable energy sources and progress towards the full digitalization of land uses (land and sea), ensuring a high protection status of the country's ecological wealth.

The building of effective, accountable and transparent institutions and the enhancement of participatory and democratic processes are pursued in Greece by expanding e-governance tools, fighting corruption, protecting human rights and enhancing strong partnerships within borders, between all stakeholders and beyond borders.

Capitalizing on the experience of the voluntary national review, next steps will include the elaboration, in 2019, of a national implementation plan for the Sustainable Development Goals, consistent with the national growth strategy, engaging all stakeholders at all stages, as well as the active involvement of the Hellenic Parliament in the overall follow-up and review process of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Guinea

[Original: French]

Following the end of the Ebola virus epidemic, Guinea has adopted a Vision of Emerging Guinea by 2040 and, based on it, a 2016–2020 National Economic and Social Development Plan designed to achieve that Vision over a five-year period.

The Plan echoes the main regional agendas: Vision 2020 of the Economic Community of West African States and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The Plan is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and is the sole framework for all development interventions. Its implementation thus ensures progress as regards Agenda 2030. Accordingly, the Government has made appropriate arrangements for monitoring and evaluation, based on lessons learned from earlier development programmes.

As a fragile State, Guinea is an advocate of State-building and peace-building. Consequently, the Government endorsed the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. This agreement lays the foundation for a new global partnership for effective aid and deals with the issue of sustainable development, paying special attention to conflict-affected and fragile countries through the New Deal for international involvement in fragile States.

In addition, the New Deal, with its five pillars, is considered by the Government to be a way of accelerating attainment of the goals of the National Economic and Social Development Plan and achievement of the Goals.

The Vision of Emerging Guinea by 2040 and the National Economic and Social Development Plan, based on the Goals and on the New Deal initiative, illustrate the important connection between sustainable development and fragility. Accordingly, in June 2018 Guinea will organize a national symposium on sustainable development and fragility.

Now that it has two years' experience implementing the National Economic and Social Development Plan, the Republic of Guinea has volunteered to present its first voluntary national review on the Goals at the High-Level Political Forum organized under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council to be held in July 2018.

In this review, Guinea focuses on questions of resource resilience and sustainability, ecosystems and ways of life, in the context of the main topic of the 2018 Forum: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.

Institutional arrangements for the preparation of the 2018 voluntary national review involve collaboration between the national agencies implementing the Goals and the technical and financial partners. The process also includes the preparatory bodies: the Steering Committee, the Expert Advisory Commission and the Technical Secretariat team. All stakeholders in Guinea attended a discussion workshop.

Going forward, there will be challenges in several areas: perfect localization of targets and indicators for the Goals; increased involvement of all Guinean stakeholders in implementation of the Goals; fine-tuning of institutional arrangements for implementing the Goals; resource mobilization; and data availability and management.

In order to promote the country's sustainable development, there will be a need for:

- Improved governance;
- More and better human capital;
- Less inequality;
- Access to basic social services;
- Capacity-building for the compilation, processing and dissemination of statistical data;
- Ongoing awareness and ownership of the Goals at national and local levels.

Guinea will also rely on public-private partnerships and South-South cooperation and on innovative financing for implementation of the Goals.

Guinea plans to produce a voluntary national review every year and will organize discussion and validation workshops after each report has been prepared.

At this High-Level Political Forum, Guinea looks forward to sharing and discussing with the international community difficulties that it is encountering in implementing the Goals.

Guinea is aware of the reasons for its lacklustre performance as regards the Millennium Development Goals and is taking steps to ensure that its result for the Sustainable Development Goals will be much better.

Hungary

[Original: English]

Hungary looks back on a long history in its commitment to sustainability, sharing the view that our global future depends on the success of achieving the holistic, integrated and participatory implementation of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty in the world. Establishing inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies based on solidarity, leaving no one behind, can provide solid grounds for prosperity and peace everywhere.

Our country, as Co-Chair of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, feels special dedication to the efficient realization of the universal and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels and is committed to reinforcing the international cooperation aimed at its accomplishment. During the consultations of the Open Working Group, Hungary put particular emphasis on building the Sustainable Development Goals and targets on the overarching principles of guaranteeing human rights, solidarity and global partnership, and considers encompassing the human-rights-based approach in the implementation process of the 2030 Agenda to be of utmost significance.

Hungary is convinced that the transformation towards a sustainable world can only be guaranteed if the three pillars of sustainable development are strengthened equally. The social pillar is reinforced by Hungary's holistic family policy, the main aims of which are to empower families and to achieve a lasting turn in demographic trends. To underline its dedication to family values, the Government declared 2018

the Year of Families. The economic pillar is supported by several measures to improve the productivity of the economy. The Hungarian Government aims to create a work-based society through the introduction of several programmes for extending employment as well as for enhancing the competitiveness of the enterprises of all sectors. The other important component of boosting sustainable and inclusive economic growth is the intention of the Government to consolidate Hungary as a knowledge- and innovation-based nation. The environmental pillar has always been at the centre of the concept of sustainability in our country. Hungary holds the opinion that clean water supply and sanitation is one of the greatest concerns of the future of humanity, playing a crucial role in furthering sustainable development and peace.

After the adoption of the sustainable development framework, a coordination mechanism was set up with the involvement of all line ministries and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade responsible for the coordination of the national implementation. In the first phase of the national implementation, the coordination process was performed within the framework of the already existing interministerial coordination committee for international development cooperation. The Government's decision to submit Hungary's voluntary national review in 2018 created a multi-stakeholder platform in 2017, which greatly enhanced both policy coherence for sustainable development and the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The platform incorporates the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and other consultative stakeholders, for example, civil society organizations, academia and the business sector. Concerning follow-up and review, the Office has been proactive in advancing the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals at both the national and the global level. According to the Office's records, 75 per cent of the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators are available in Hungary.

The first voluntary national review of Hungary is a stocktaking exercise, an overview of where the country stands in the process of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. All the line ministries gave their inputs to the review by analysing the policies and strategies of their scope of authority in depth and presenting them in a comprehensive way by applying a cross-sectoral approach. Besides the government sector, the strategic stakeholders — the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, the Office of the Ombudsman for Future Generations, non-governmental organizations, academia, the business sector and youth — also gave their contributions to the review. The final report covers the policy areas of all the sectors of the country, assuring the holistic and inclusive process of both the accomplishment of the 2030 Agenda and the preparation of the voluntary national review.

Reporting on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals has provided an important opportunity to assess national policies and strategies in relation to the Goals, to map the ones that have a significant impact on achieving the 2030 Agenda and to present the best practices that our country is pleased to share with others. The possibility of evaluating the implementation level of the national strategies, policies and best practices will be ensured in a subsequent report in the future.

Ireland

[Original: English]

Ireland is proud to have played a significant role in the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as co-facilitator, together with Kenya, of the intergovernmental negotiations. Ireland will continue to show leadership as the Sustainable Development Goals are implemented, both at home and across the world.

While Ireland adopted its first national sustainable development strategy more than two decades ago, the Sustainable Development Goals require a step change in the integration of national social, economic and environmental policy. To this end, Ireland has recently prepared the Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018–2020. The Plan provides a framework for how Ireland will achieve the Goals domestically by 2030 and support their global implementation. It reflects Ireland's "whole-of-government" approach to the Goals, which will see the mainstreaming of the Goals across national policies and through its engagement abroad. The Plan is also based on the fundamental commitment of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind and to reach the farthest behind first.

The Sustainable Development Goals underline the linkages between national sustainable development and Ireland's global engagement, particularly through the work of Irish Aid (Ireland's official overseas development assistance programme). The Government will publish a new white paper on international development in the second half of 2018, which will further strengthen the alignment of Ireland's aid programme with the Goals. Expanding Ireland's global reach and impact is a priority for the Government, and our engagement with the 2030 Agenda will take place within this context.

While several existing national policies take account of our commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals, the linked processes of developing the Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018–2020 and preparing Ireland's first voluntary national review have provided an opportunity for enhancing awareness of, and engagement with, the Goals across the Government. This has been particularly salient in relation to assessing the level of alignment with existing national policies. As part of the national implementation plan, Ireland has mapped existing policies and programmes against each of the 169 targets of the Goals and, while policy alignment will be an ongoing process, this mapping exercise indicates significant potential in national policies to achieve the Goals.

The national implementation plan and voluntary national review processes have also provided a focus for stakeholder engagement, and Ireland will increase its efforts to promote national stakeholders' meaningful engagement with, and participation in, implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. A national stakeholder forum will hold its inaugural meeting in June 2018.

In order to provide a comprehensive assessment of national progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Ireland considered it important that its first voluntary national review address all 17 of the Goals, in each case providing information on progress to date and outlining Ireland's policy response to the Goals and targets. In order to highlight the interlinkages between the national and global levels, Ireland's voluntary national review also addresses how Ireland is supporting each of the Goals globally, including through our official development assistance programme.

The timing of this first voluntary national review, coming shortly after the adoption of the national implementation plan, is particularly useful in providing a baseline against which Ireland's future progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals can be measured. The voluntary national review is also timely in that many of the measures through which Ireland will achieve the Goals will take place within the context of Project Ireland 2040, which was launched in February 2018 and is the Government's overarching policy initiative to make Ireland a better country for all of our people, a country that reflects the best of who we are and what we aspire to be. Project Ireland 2040 is made up of the National Planning Framework to 2040 and the National Development Plan 2018–2027.

Ireland is committed to delivering its second voluntary national review to the 2022 session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Jamaica

[Original: English]

Introduction

Jamaica has demonstrated its commitment to achieving sustainable and inclusive development through Vision 2030 Jamaica, the country's first long-term national development plan. The report on the voluntary national review of Jamaica coincides with the preparation of the fourth successive Medium-term Socioeconomic Policy Framework, for the period 2018–2021, which is the mechanism for the prioritization, planning, review and monitoring of the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica. The Framework is underpinned by the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental), inclusiveness and equity, all consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Jamaica's main messages in the voluntary national review include strong national ownership of and commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals; a systematic and integrated framework for the monitoring and implementation of national development priorities; key development achievements since 2015 and priorities for 2018–2021; inclusiveness and participation of stakeholders; challenges; and next steps.

National ownership

Vision 2030 Jamaica represents the country's commitment to good governance, democratic principles and participation of the citizenry in national development. This commitment has been extended to the 2030 Agenda through national and sector-specific consultations with stakeholders to identify and align the country's development priorities. Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals is framed in Vision 2030 Jamaica, resulting in a seamless integration; additionally, there is a 91.3 per cent alignment between both. The road map for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, approved by the Cabinet in June 2017, identified the Medium-term Socioeconomic Policy Framework as the primary vehicle for monitoring the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the Goals.

Integrated framework for monitoring implementation

The national coordination mechanism for the 2030 Agenda comprises the National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee; the thematic working groups; and the 2030 Agenda core group for the Sustainable Development Goals. The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee, established in 2017, reports through the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service to the Cabinet and the Parliament and provides policy and strategic advice for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Goals. The Committee is a technical body of high-level representatives from the Government, civil society groups, the private sector, academia, trade unions, the political directorate and youth. The core group comprises the Planning Institute of Jamaica, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

Data, monitoring and reporting

National consultations convened in March 2016 to assess Jamaica's data and statistical capacity for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goal indicators highlighted that Jamaica currently produces 66 indicators. The Statistical Institute of Jamaica has led the process to establish a coordinated national statistics system. Jamaica's engagement with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators provides for continued opportunities to advocate for support to develop national and regional statistical capacity.

Inclusiveness, stakeholder participation and partnership

A communications and advocacy road map for the period 2018–2021 has been developed to inform communications and stakeholder engagement regarding the Sustainable Development Goals. The process of sensitization began in 2017 to "localize the Sustainable Development Goals", under the theme "The Jamaica we want: Vision 2030 Jamaica, advancing the SDGs ... leaving no one behind".

Performance 2015–2018 and priorities for 2018–2021

Under the Medium-term Socioeconomic Policy Framework 2015–2018, critical strides were made in achieving medium-term development outcomes as Jamaica maintained its position among countries with a high human development ranking and improved in key indicators of human capital development, made significant gains towards macroeconomic stability and improved in key prerequisite areas for growth.

Under the Medium-term Socioeconomic Policy Framework 2018–2021, the country will continue the Economic Reform Programme, which has been credited with macroeconomic gains, and place greater focus on economic growth and job creation. The revision, formulation and implementation of several critical social policies and strategies to address the changing demographics will be pursued to harness the demographic bonus. The country will also advance approaches of climate-proofing for development and continue the pursuit of policies to strengthen sustainable management of the environment and build the country's resilience to natural and human-caused disasters.

Challenges

Jamaica continues to be affected by challenges that are triggered by vulnerabilities and external economic shocks, including the impact of natural disasters, negative effects of climate change and high levels of indebtedness. Jamaica is challenged to implement policies that will trigger fast and sustained progress towards the goals in a context of limited fiscal space.

Next steps

Accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will require focus on:

- Implementation of national priorities in the Medium-term Socioeconomic Policy Framework 2018–2021
- Strengthening the national statistics system
- Improving the monitoring and evaluation framework
- Identifying mechanisms and strategies for financing the Sustainable Development Goals
- Improving policy coherence and building capacity in policy integration and the use of goal-oriented, evidence-based and participatory frameworks to formulate, implement and review policies and strategies for sustainable development
- Ongoing communication and advocacy programme for the Sustainable Development Goals

Kiribati

[Original: English]

A small island State of 33 atolls spanning 3.5 million square kilometres of ocean, Kiribati is faced with a number of development challenges, including climate change. While rated as one of the poorest countries in the Pacific, Kiribati has made remarkable progress since 2014. Increasing employment opportunities in the public and private sectors have been complemented by increases in overseas worker schemes, but unemployment is still high. However, economic progress relies heavily on the continued performance of the national fishery, which can be volatile and is also under threat from climate change.

Recent years have seen significant advances in school enrolment rates and basic literacy and numeracy, particularly for girls and young women. There have also been improvements in universal accessibility, notwithstanding the high costs of service delivery and limited capacity at tertiary institutions.

Kiribati's health challenges are stark: the under-5 and maternal mortality rates remain among the highest in the Pacific; malnutrition is a common issue; the prevalence of non-communicable diseases is high; water issues are acute; and tuberculosis is persistent.

Gender-based violence and wider gender issues are a key social and economic issue.

Climate change is a serious challenge for Kiribati, affecting almost every facet of daily life. From acute water shortages, tidal inundation, seawater intrusion and heat and storm events, Kiribati risks reversing recent development gains through climate events and ongoing impacts. Significant capital works are under way in transport, water, power, sanitation, coastal protection and food security, but the pace of climate change threatens to outpace these measures. Importantly, climate change has the potential to disrupt the largest economic resource available to Kiribati — the tuna fishery — through anticipated impacts on tuna migration and spawning patterns across the Pacific.

The Sustainable Development Goals in Kiribati

Following the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, the Government issued the preliminary indicators to all government agencies, community groups, development partners and private sector organizations. This led to the formation of the Kiribati Development Plan 2016–2019 and a national set of indicators.

In addition to the four-yearly national plan, the Government of Kiribati also has a 20-year vision for the development of a wealthy, healthy and peaceful nation. Covering the period to 2036, Kiribati Vision 20 is designed around the enabling environment and social benefits from the key economic sectors of tourism and fisheries.

As the Kiribati Development Plan is broadly aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the integration of the midterm review of the Plan with the voluntary national review is aimed at assessing national goals alongside international and regional commitments in a single report.

The process for the review

The Development Coordinating Committee is the main governing body that coordinates and reports on all development activity in Kiribati, including the review of the Kiribati Development Plan.

Following the appointment of a special task force for the Sustainable Development Goals from among Committee members, an intensive consultation period with all stakeholders commenced. Each partner was educated on the importance of the Goals, data collection and the timeline for the review. Stakeholder consultations identified issues with capacity constraints; competing priorities; limited stakeholder engagement; lack of alignment between the national, regional and global indicator sets; insufficient resources; lack of baseline data; and poor capacity to collect and analyse data.

The review of Kiribati Vision 20, the Kiribati Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goal indicators highlighted several areas of indicator fragmentation and poor data collection. In particular, some global, regional and even national indicators are currently beyond the capability of Kiribati to effectively measure and report on.

Stakeholders verified what data were available and reviewed the final report prior to it being tabled at the high-level political forum.

Outcomes of the review

Following the review, national goals and indicators will be realigned for the second half of the four-year term of the Kiribati Development Plan. Together with the developing framework for Kiribati Vision 20, there is substantial scope to further reduce fragmentation. Time and resource constraints during the review also meant that coverage of the outer islands has been limited: future reviews should aim to provide better coverage of both urban and rural Kiribati, leaving no one behind.

Kiribati continues to face limited institutional and financial capacity to effectively monitor and implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Continued support from development partners is important and valued, especially in the light of the potential graduation of Kiribati from least developed country status. To this end, Kiribati extends the invitation to donor partners to continue their support towards the achievement of the Goals.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: English]

Introduction

Strategically located in South-East Asia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is a landlocked, multi-ethnic and mountainous country with a population of around 6.5 million. With a young population, the country is projected to benefit from the demographic dividend. It is progressing towards graduation from least developed country status.

The report on the voluntary national review of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is focused on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and its own localized sustainable development goal 18, while highlighting the prominent linkages between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the national development vision for 2030, in particular the eighth National Socioeconomic Development Plan of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for the period 2016–2020, and progress on and the challenges of each Goal.

Institutional mechanisms

The national steering committee for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals was established by presidential decree in 2017 and is chaired by

the Prime Minister, with members of the committee from all concerned ministries and agencies. The national Sustainable Development Goals secretariat and focal points for the Goals in line ministries have also been appointed to lead and take ownership of each Goal and ensure coordination and collaboration within the Government while working with United Nations agencies and development partners to get necessary support.

Prioritization and linkage between the National Socioeconomic Development Plan and the 2030 Agenda

The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is strongly committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implementation and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The country was among the earliest to localize the Goals and integrate them into its national planning framework. Nearly 60 per cent of the indicators of the eighth National Socioeconomic Development Plan are linked to Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The remaining indicators will be integrated into the ninth and tenth Plans.

In September 2016, the Lao People's Democratic Republic adopted its own additional sustainable development goal 18, called "lives safe from unexploded ordnance". Bombs dropped during the Indochina War (1964–1973) made the Lao People's Democratic Republic the most heavily bombed country in terms of bombs dropped per capita. Given the impacts of contamination of unexploded ordnance, sustainable development goal 18 is one of the country's top priority goals.

Methodology of the review

On the basis of the principle of leaving no one behind and for an inclusive, participatory and transparent voluntary national review process, the secretariat organized a series of consultations in 2017 and 2018 with stakeholders from the Government, the National Assembly, the private sector, academia, non-profit associations, international non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and development partners. Additionally, discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals has been infused into the agenda of the round-table meetings over the past two years.

Progress and challenges

Recent years of high economic growth have helped the Lao People's Democratic Republic to meet two of the three interrelated criteria for graduation from the least developed country category in the 2018 review of the Committee for Development Policy. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals will fulfil the criteria for graduation.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has made remarkable progress in many areas, for example, in poverty reduction, with nearly 100 per cent of citizens having gained access to electricity, 99 per cent net enrolment in primary schools, an improved literacy rate, quality vocational training and health care, an increased number of women holding important positions in the public and private sectors and the implementation of frameworks for environmentally friendly economic growth. Despite such progress, challenges remain, including insufficient financial and human resources, widening inequality and income disparities, challenging infant mortality and school dropout rates, difficulty in gaining access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises, unavailability of updated data, especially disaggregated data, a shortage of qualified staff undertaking monitoring and evaluation of the goals, and inadequate knowledge and awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals among public officials and citizens. Economic growth still relies largely on natural resources.

Lessons learned and the way forward

- The first lesson drawn from the voluntary national review process is that the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals has to be sequenced to converge seamlessly with the development of national plans.
- Second, the Government's strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda has been a driving force for early localization, integration and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Third, administrative data systems in many goal areas still need to be harmonized, streamlined and strengthened while enhancing institutional and statistical capacity-building.
- Fourth, collaboration and coordination across line ministries and between the central and local levels need to improve so that interventions can converge to reach the most left-behind groups.
- Fifth, the Government will continue to identify development financing needs for implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Latvia

[Original: English]

Political will and inclusive process

On the occasion of the centenary of the Republic of Latvia, the Government and stakeholders involved in the voluntary national review process will present Latvia's progress in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing the sustainable development challenges beyond 2020.

Latvia has mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals into the planning system. The planning process is inclusive, with elected representatives focusing on evidence-based decisions to ensure transparency, policy coherence and political responsibility. The review, agreed by stakeholders in a participatory process and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, sets the baseline for all 17 Goals. It will serve as a useful reference and measurement tool for all stakeholders as they further integrate the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development both in Latvia and globally.

Evidence-based

Each assertion in the review is backed up by solid evidence, and contributions from stakeholders, introducing best practices, were also included. A mapping was carried out of 169 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals towards Goal and target indicators in the sustainable development strategy of Latvia until 2030 (Latvia 2030), the national development plan to 2020 and sectoral policies. A midterm impact assessment was conducted in 2017 on achieving the targets set in the national development plan and Latvia 2030 that included data on progress, expert opinion surveys and investment analyses.

Key challenges

Latvia will focus on areas in which progress must be accelerated. Latvia's sustainable development challenges are concentrated in two vectors:

- Ensuring an innovative and eco-efficient economy
- Reducing inequality of income and opportunity

As stated in Latvia 2030, progress will be achieved by ensuring sustainability of strategic resources, namely, human resources, nature, culture, digital capital and finances (both at the public and private levels). Putting people first is the overarching development approach set by the parliament. Improvements in health, education and decent work are fundamental for solving the challenges along both vectors.

Main challenges in the economy

- Increasing productivity of the economy, including through the efficient and productive use of resources
- Introducing a system to reduce and pre-empt skills mismatches in the labour market
- Improving labour by providing high-quality adult education, promoting return migration and access to expertise from abroad, and ensuring access to housing, among other measures
- Increasing the share of pupils with higher level competencies
- Increasing the share of society that is healthy and fit for work
- Attracting investments to the productive economy
- Increasing private and public investment in research and innovation
- Implementing the "data-driven nation" concept in Latvia
- Adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Promoting wider use of renewable energy
- Reusing and recycling more waste

Main challenges in reducing inequalities

- Reducing emigration and encouraging return migration
- Balancing work and family life
- Strengthening regional centres, ensuring "intelligent shrinking", including with regard to road infrastructure and housing and public transportation on demand in areas of low population density
- Encouraging accumulation of assets by individuals (housing, savings, etc.)
- Involving more people in adult education and retraining for more productive work
- Decreasing the share of pupils with low competencies
- Increasing access to health care, in particular maternal and child health care, access to specialists and diagnostic services for low-income persons and persons at risk of occupational injuries or illnesses
- Developing individualized plans for persons in need of services aimed at elimination of inequality
- Creating a minimum income system and providing adequate funding for social support.

Conclusions and next steps

The analysis reveals the challenges to be addressed in Latvia's medium-term policy from 2021. The challenges will be addressed in 2018 and 2019 through our inclusive policymaking process. Some specific policy impact assessments, as well as

specific policy proposals, have yet to be completed and public discussions still need to be held on some issues. Improvements will be achieved by restructuring activities, focusing on specific target groups and reallocating investments, among other measures. The envisaged transformations will multiply gains, for example, widespread digitalization and increasing competencies of school children will offset costs, and are essential for achieving all of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Cabinet of Ministers will decide on Latvia's medium-term goals, indicators and targets within available funding limits on the basis of proposals submitted by the National Development Council and respective line ministries. Through this process, Latvia will succeed in reducing inequality, ensuring inclusive growth and transforming its economy towards innovation and eco-efficiency, leading to an increased contribution to the global sustainable development agenda.

Lebanon

[Original: English]

Lebanon is a high middle-income country with a democratic political system, a liberal economy based on entrepreneurship and largely reliant on services, and a society characterized by cultural diversity and openness.

Following the election of a new President in October 2016 and the formation of a national conciliation Government in December 2016, the Government accelerated its engagement towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while adopting a localizing approach. A national committee formed to oversee the roll-out of the Sustainable Development Goals was chaired by the Prime Minister. In addition to representatives from all line ministries, the committee also includes civil society and private sector representatives to generate wide ownership of the agenda. Thematic groups have been formed along four "Ps" (people, prosperity, planet, and peace, justice and strong institutions) together with a statistical task force. The initial focus of the committee has been the voluntary national review, and a national website for the Goals was created and populated. Three workshops were held to raise awareness on the Goals, promote inclusion and launch preparations for the voluntary national review. Regional consultations with civil society also took place. In addition, a parliamentary committee on the Goals was established.

Lebanon's past performance on the Millennium Development Goals was mixed, with the country still facing development challenges, including on poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The situation was highly exacerbated by the impact of and spillover from the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. While Lebanon has shown exceptional solidarity by temporarily hosting 1.5 million persons displaced from the Syrian Arab Republic, this has come at a high cost, compounding pre-existing development challenges and stretching Lebanon beyond its limits.

Today, Lebanon's political scene has found a promising equilibrium. Domestic political unity, coupled with support from the international community, has made it clear that Lebanon's political and economic stability are essential, including for the overall region, and need to be preserved. This was demonstrated during the meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon and the three conferences in support of Lebanon that followed.

"People" are at the core of the Government's focus. Poverty rates, already high before the Syrian crisis, have worsened since then. The communities hosting the majority of displaced persons lack the resources and capacities to address the increased demand on public and social services. This has not halted the Government's efforts towards creating a better environment for all, through the pursuit of national programmes that enhance social assistance packages for the most vulnerable

Lebanese (such as the National Poverty Targeting Programme), and to provide education for all through the Reaching All Children with Education programme. Despite the challenges, many positive developments have taken place in Lebanon's health system, with improvement in the quality of services and coverage. Women's rights constitute one of the cornerstones of the Government's approach; while gender parity scores positively in education, efforts are being intensified to improve women's participation in the political and economic spheres.

With "prosperity" in mind, but also with "people" at the core of its thinking, the Government presented to the Conference on economic development through reforms and with business (CEDRE) its vision for stabilization, growth and employment, outlining its plan to spur economic growth, create decent jobs and provide an environment conducive to private sector investment in the medium to long term. Consultations were held around the vision with relevant stakeholders, including civil society. At the core of this vision is an ambitious capital investment plan outlining priority infrastructure projects to support the recovery of economic growth, as well as sectoral and structural reforms. The potential of projects to contribute to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals was one of the selection criteria for the capital investment plan. At the same time, the budgets for 2017 and 2018 were passed and are projecting a decline in the deficit through a number of fiscal measures.

Meanwhile, the Government is striving to ensure a better "planet" for its citizens. Water and air pollution, together with solid waste management, remain the main impediments to environmental sustainability and are addressed in a medium-term infrastructure investment plan covering water, wastewater, solid waste, transport, electricity, telecommunications, tourism and industry. The Government's sectoral strategies on water and electricity aim to increase the share from renewable energy.

The Government is cognizant that none of the Sustainable Development Goals can advance without "peace, justice and strong institutions"; progress is being made through cross-sectoral efforts towards the modernization of the public sector, good governance initiatives currently under way and the Access to Information Law voted last year. Improving government statistics will definitely constitute a cross-cutting reform that facilitates the mapping of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and will ultimately serve to improve policymaking.

The parliamentary elections held in May 2018 and the subsequent formation of the Government will constitute new grounds for taking forward the Government's medium-term vision while covering all dimensions of sustainable development, with well-chosen priority challenges to be tackled.

Lithuania

[Original: English]

Lithuania finds it very important to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at both the national and international levels. Lithuania has carried out an analysis of compatibility, which showed that most of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets are reflected in the national strategic planning documents.

To ensure coherence and integration in economic development, the resolution of social problems and the protection of the environment, Lithuania has a system of institutional and strategic planning based on the principles of sustainable development.

A group of experts has been established for drawing up the voluntary national review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and involves representatives of various ministries, non-governmental organizations and municipalities.

Lithuania has distinguished the following priority areas: reduction of poverty, social exclusion and income inequality and promotion of employment; the strengthening of public health and increasing the quality of health care and accessibility of health services; development of an innovative economy and smart energy; quality education; and development cooperation.

In the area of poverty, social exclusion and income inequality reduction, Lithuania has made some progress, but has been faced with challenges. In 2016, exposure to poverty risk or social exclusion affected 30 per cent of the Lithuanian population. Therefore, the State is implementing significant reforms that are contributing to an increase in retirement pensions, the promotion of employment opportunities, favourable financial conditions for families and an increase in State-subsidized income.

Strengthening public health and increasing the quality of health care and accessibility of health services are inseparable from sustainable development. To ensure a healthier society, Lithuania has focused on alcohol prevention, healthy nutrition and morbidity reduction. While increasing the accessibility of quality and acceptable public health-care services, Lithuania has implemented integrated health-care service models, analysed and assessed possibilities to provide public health-care services that meet the new present-day needs of the population and increased the variety of services.

Innovative solutions and smart energy are the basis of Lithuania's modern and sustainable economy. By encouraging undertakings to use raw materials with greater efficiency, optimize production processes and reduce the generation of waste and air pollution, Lithuania has focused on the promotion of eco-innovation and investment in new technologies. The implementation of the national energy independence strategy strengthens the country's energy security and competitiveness and promotes energy prosumerism. Lithuania has built a liquefied natural gas terminal and launched Lithuanian-Swedish and Lithuanian-Polish intersystem power links. The share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption accounts for almost 26 per cent, and heat from renewable energy sources exceeds 46 per cent.

Quality education is another goal of particular importance for Lithuania. Considerable attention is given to the accessibility and quality of early age education, the improvement of general education, learning outcomes and inclusive education development. The Lithuanian population is among the most educated in the world. Since 2011, Lithuania has been a leader among the European Union member States by number of the population aged between 25 and 64 years with secondary and/or higher education. In order to provide more favourable conditions for high-quality education, Lithuania intends to implement an extensive reform of the education system, involving preschool, primary, general and higher education as well as adult education and training.

Despite the challenges arising at the national level, Lithuania has distinguished development cooperation as one of its priorities. Lithuania contributes to poverty reduction and the implementation of other Sustainable Development Goals by providing multilateral and bilateral assistance to partner countries worldwide. One of the fundamental principles of the Lithuanian development cooperation policy is partnership with a partner country, the international community of donor countries, international organizations, international financial institutions, local government authorities, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the domestic and foreign private sector.

In addition, Lithuania devotes much attention to the sustainable development of cities and communities. The new general plan of the territory of Lithuania is being developed. It will become the key instrument for ensuring inclusive and sustainable urban development, reducing the socioeconomic exclusion of cities and the negative

impact of built-up territories on the environment and securing the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

Lithuania is determined to continue the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contribute to the solution of global problems by making use of the opportunities provided by the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mali

[Original: French]

The 2018 voluntary national review, which is Mali's first exercise of this kind, covers all the activities undertaken in the context of the operationalization of the Sustainable Development Goals since their launch in February 2016. It was entrusted to a Steering Committee composed of representatives of ministerial departments, civil society, the private sector and Parliament; this Steering Committee established a small sub-committee to do the actual drafting of the voluntary national review. The final version of the draft was studied by the Steering Committee and then submitted for approval at a national workshop held on 15 May 2018 with over 120 participants.

Based on the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals (2015), the Government has actively embarked on implementation of Agenda 2030, favouring a participatory and inclusive approach.

There are extensive plans for revisiting and aligning the main national planning documents (particularly the national study Prospect Mali 2025 and the Strategic Framework for Economic Growth and Sustainable Development), the regional development plans and several sectoral development policies and strategies in order to reflect priority Goals. In addition, the Government's campaign "Leaving no citizen behind", designed to strengthen national unity and democracy, has radically improved synergies in the formulation and implementation of development policies such as the Presidential Social Emergency Programme and the "Zero Hunger" Initiative.

Preparatory activities for the operationalization of the Goals consisted of feedback, training and prioritization workshops at both regional and national levels, establishment of a Parliamentary Committee for monitoring and evaluation of the Goals and the proposal for an institutional mechanism to coordinate implementation of the Goals.

Institutional arrangements proposed under the authority of the Prime Minister consist of five thematic groups at the national level and three decentralized levels in the regions, cercles and communes.

The voluntary national review also provided an opportunity to assess the situation in the various sectors, providing an objective method for evaluation of progress made. For the Goals under review in 2018, the situation is as follows:

Goal 6: The Sectoral Water and Sanitation Programme, adopted in 2006, prescribes national efforts through national action plans for access to clean water, plans supporting the integrated management of water resources, and the business plans of the Malian Company for Clean Water Resources and the Malian Company for Clean Water Management. In 2016, the rate of access to clean water was estimated at 65.3 per cent in rural areas and 70.6 per cent in urban areas (compared with 70 per cent in 2015).

Access to an upgraded and sustainable sanitation system increased from 24 per cent in 2015 to 27 per cent in 2016. Lastly, the number of households with upgraded latrines increased by five percentage points: from 25 per cent in 2015 to 30 per cent in 2016.

Goal 7: Programmes are continuing under the national energy policy adopted in 2006. Mali's energy balance shows that biomass accounts for about 80 per cent of national energy consumption, while renewable energies account for only 1 per cent. National access to electricity was 39 per cent in 2016, compared with 36.11 per cent in 2015.

Goal 11: The national urban policy, formulated in 2016, works in synergy with the national urban development and housing policy and the urban master plans of the urban centres to improve the population's living conditions.

Goal 12: The formulation of a national sustainable development strategy, initiated in 2006, is nearing completion.

Goal 15: In Mali, land ecosystems are deteriorating at an alarming rate, owing to natural phenomena (erosion, desertification), exacerbated by irrational land use practices.

Goal 17: Considerable efforts are being made to improve aid effectiveness. In addition to the common country assistance strategy prepared with the technical and financial partners and now in its second version, the Government has launched the process of formulation of the national development cooperation policy and the national aid management policy, so as to make better use of all the resources available for official development assistance.

From the multitude of targets and indicators for the Goals, Mali has made a careful choice that will ensure harmonious sustainable development for the well-being of its population. The main challenges in this regard are how to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali adopted through the Algiers process and how to improve governance.

Malta

[Original: English]

As a small island State with limited natural resources, an ever-growing economy and high population density, the concept of sustainable development is at the heart of Malta's economic, social and environmental development. In fact, back in 2012, the Maltese Government adopted the Sustainable Development Act, resulting in a legislative framework in which the Government was mandated to mainstream sustainable development in its policies.

Three years later, the global community came together and adopted one of the most ambitious agendas the United Nations has ever agreed upon; that of committing each and every State to implement a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals so that by 2030, the world will reach a state of prosperity, protection and dignity, for both citizens and the planet. It is a promise the global community has made to leave no one behind.

Malta recognizes the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the most comprehensive global development plan to date, and its value lies in its universal and transformative nature. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and accompanying targets offer a blueprint for a better future, preserving what we have today while working towards a better tomorrow. Malta has embraced the 2030 Agenda, and the voluntary national review is an opportunity for Malta to share its endeavours with the international community in terms of implementation of the Goals.

Malta's voluntary national review covers all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with some being reviewed in more detail than others depending on their relevance for Malta and the data and input available. The review follows a simple process, starting

with an overview of Malta's country profile in order to place the Goals in a specific country context. The review provides an overview of Malta's policies in the field of sustainable development. A supplementary section provides an introduction to the Government's ongoing plans to launch Vision 2050, still in draft form at the time of reporting, which will offer guidelines for long-term sustainable development in Malta while integrating the 2030 Agenda by offering a framework for the mainstreaming of sustainable development across all levels of government. Once adopted, Vision 2050 will offer long-term guidelines towards more efficient resource utilization and the long-term management of and investment in human, social and material resources, which is particularly relevant for Malta's specific country context.

The voluntary national review provides information on ways in which Malta is increasing ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals through a whole-of-government approach, while also sharing information on the methodology followed to conduct the review. Malta's review also includes information on its new official development assistance implementation plan and on the newly established Malta Development Bank.

The voluntary national review provides information on policies and programmes in place that contribute to sustainable development in general, and to the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in particular, and on measures taking place across the Maltese islands. The review also contains input from Malta's national platform of Maltese non-governmental development organizations, SKOP, in terms of work being undertaken by the platform to further awareness and establish a channel of communication among local non-governmental development organizations and the public sector on development-related issues.

While this is the first voluntary national review to be presented by Malta at the high-level political forum, the preparation of the review has been a useful exercise in engaging all stakeholders in a comprehensive process of consultation while also raising further awareness of the need to break silos and harmonize efforts towards long-term sustainable development.

Malta acknowledges that reaching the goals by 2030 is a challenge for all, and the journey is long and requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders within the international community. Malta remains committed to continuing on this journey of sustainability and stands ready to work in partnership with other States and stakeholders in this regard.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]

Since September 2015, Mexico has implemented the following measures to ensure gradual achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals:

- In 2015, Mexico established a specialized technical committee on the Sustainable Development Goals as the body responsible for coordinating the work of generating, monitoring and updating data.
- The National Institute of Statistics and Geography mapped the global indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and identified that Mexico will follow up on 169 of the 232 indicators proposed.
- In 2016, the Senate established a working group to ensure legislative follow-up on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- In 2017, a national council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was established as a coordinating mechanism for achievement of the Sustainable

Development Goals, which will involve key sectors of civil society through thematic committees.

- In 2017, the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit conducted an analysis of the contribution of Federal Government budgetary programmes to the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to determine the timeliness and relevance of public investment in development.
- At the subnational level, the National Conference of Governors established a committee on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As at May 2018, 28 of the 32 states have follow-up mechanisms and some municipalities have committees on the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the Federal Government has issued a guide for mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda in the drafting of state and municipal development plans.
- In 2018, the Planning Act was amended to incorporate the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as the principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination in national planning. The reform established that the national development plan will contain 20-year projections.
- In 2018, the Government will finalize its national strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the participation of various sectors. The strategy will define priorities, targets, indicators and challenges to be overcome.
- The main political parties and coalitions in Mexico have indicated their support for the 2030 Agenda in some of their key documents.

Multi-stakeholder participation and ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals

Mexico has made significant progress in creating ownership of the 2030 Agenda. The national strategy was developed following five regional dialogues that were organized with civil society organizations to incorporate their perspectives, priorities and concerns.

Various channels of communication have been established with the business sector, including the Partnership for Sustainability, which is a platform for dialogue and action created by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation, and ongoing dialogue with the Mexican Business Council and its members. The Partnership for Sustainability has established five working committees in strategic areas, and both the Partnership and the Mexican Business Council were involved in developing the national strategy.

The Government is working with the academic community to develop proposals for sustainable public policies and to gather information to demonstrate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. A sustainable development solutions network is also being created. Lastly, contact has been made with the National Association of Higher Education Institutions, the Scientific and Technological Advisory Forum and various universities.

Challenges

Mexico faces significant challenges in strengthening the involvement of different actors. Measures are needed to institutionalize mechanisms for participation and the joint creation of public policies. To that end, the country needs to formalize mechanisms for civil society participation and the move towards implementation; create an effective ownership and dissemination strategy; improve mechanisms for measurement, review and accountability; ensure long-term maintenance of the 2030 Agenda regardless of changes of Government; guarantee budgetary resources for its

implementation; build the capacities of subnational governments; establish inter-agency coordination, both vertical and horizontal; and strengthen the interlinkages between the Sustainable Development Goals, the cross-cutting 2030 Agenda and other global sustainable development agendas.

The Niger

[Original: French]

The Niger is implementing Agenda 2030 by integrating the Sustainable Development Goals in its strategic development documents.

Accordingly, in order to share experiences with its peers, the Niger decided to submit its first voluntary national review to the Forum. The situation regarding each Goal is described below:

As regards access to water and sanitation (Goal 6), the situation is that 50 per cent of the population uses clean water supplied by secure services throughout the country. However, 3.4 per cent of the rural population and 19.6 per cent of the urban population use only basic sanitation services. The ongoing implementation of the 2017–2021 Economic and Social Development Plan will definitely improve the situation.

Regarding access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (Goal 7), it should be noted that only 3.7 per cent of the population of the Niger used mostly clean fuels and technologies in 2015. In order to correct this situation and to attain Goal 7, the Niger is continuing to implement a National Action Plan for Renewable Energies, which will eventually considerably reduce the use of biomass as a source of energy.

With regard to the need to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Goal 11), 17.9 per cent of the urban population were living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing in 2012. However, the Government has included measures in the 2017–2021 Economic and Social Development Plan to improve the quality of life in towns, to facilitate access to adequate housing and also to improve the management of solid waste and other sources of pollution.

As regards sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12), the Niger had already in 2013 adopted a ten-year programme to promote good practices. However, in order to achieve this Goal, additional ongoing measures will be taken during the implementation of the 2017–2021 Economic and Social Development Plan.

Regarding the preservation and restoration of land ecosystems (Goal 15), progress is being made towards certain targets and particularly those concerning forest development and reforestation. However, much remains to be done and the Government is committed to the task.

Concerning the need to step up activities under the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (Goal 17), the Niger has broadened its tax base and revitalized private and institutional partnerships. For example, the average tax rate has risen from 26.2 per cent in 2012 to 36.1 per cent in 2016.

After contextualization of Agenda 2030, pursuit of the Goals and prioritization of their targets at the national level, only 43 out of 169 targets and 66 out of 232 indicators were included in the Niger's 2017–2021 Economic and Social Development Plan.

The vision and the national development goals included in the 2035 National Strategy of Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth and in the 2017–2021 Economic and Social Development Plan are consistent with the Goals.

However, there are still huge problems with implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2030 in the Niger. The Government is nevertheless engaged in multiple initiatives at all levels, following the principle that no one will be left behind, in order to achieve the Goals by 2030. The main problems are financing and the ability of the national statistical system to produce disaggregated, exhaustive and reliable data for measurement and monitoring of the indicators of the Goals at the national, regional and local levels.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]

At the end of 2014, by Decree No. 2794, Paraguay adopted its national development plan, "Paraguay 2030", which is the result of consultations involving more than 2,000 representatives of the central Government, subnational governments, civil society, the private sector and academia at the national level, which were held in 10 of the country's departments. In 2015, after eight rounds of intergovernmental negotiations with input from a wide range of actors, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals were launched. The goals of these two instruments overlap directly or partially.

The national development plan defines three main components: poverty reduction and social development, inclusive economic growth and the integration of Paraguay in the global arena. In addition, it establishes four cross-cutting themes: equal opportunities, transparent and efficient governance, territory management and development, and environmental sustainability. The participatory process that led to the national development pian reflects the consensus-based approach adopted in Paraguayan society in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The results-based planning system is the main instrument used to implement the national development plan. Since 2016, efforts have been made to align the national budget with the national development plan and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Just as the 2030 Agenda emphasizes human rights, the national development plan also prioritizes human rights through a holistic cross-sectoral approach. Thus, component 1, on poverty reduction and social development, focuses on putting dignity, well-being and freedoms and opportunities for the complete fulfilment of persons at the centre of public efforts, including efforts to protect and promote the human and cultural rights guaranteed by the State, by providing the means needed for enjoyment of those rights, including the full and equal inclusion of women and men in all spheres of development. This inclusive approach to development addresses the needs of all populations living in vulnerable situations in Paraguay.

Together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Paraguay designed the Recommendations Monitoring System, an online public platform that provides information on the implementation of international recommendations in this area. Based on this experience, Paraguay provides technical South-South cooperation to other countries. An enhanced version of the Recommendations Monitoring System is being developed to strengthen the capacity to monitor implementation of the recommendations and to link them to the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.

A significant step forward in institutional arrangements was the creation of an inter-agency coordination committee for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the international commitments assumed by the country in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. The committee is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is composed of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning for Economic and Social Development and the President's Social Affairs Office.

The Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses is responsible for coordinating the work to establish indicators with institutions that produce information. Through an agreement signed with the United Nations Development Programme, the Management System of Governance platform was developed, which links the Sustainable Development Goals to all programmes, subprogrammes and projects implemented by the Government and provides information on the allocation of financial resources to the Goals in the national budget.

Paraguay, the world's largest producer per capita and largest exporter of clean renewable electricity, welcomed the agreement entitled Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions, which was concluded between the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Itaipu Binacional in order to promote the sustainability of water and energy in line with Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 7. Under the partnership, a model office was established on the Paraguayan side of the dam with the aim of creating a global sustainability network to provide a platform to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the national development plan are driving the creation of public policies that will allow for greater efficiencies in the achievement of the Goals. Implementing the Goals and the national development plan requires the active involvement of all branches of Government and all sectors of society.

Poland

[Original: English]

In 2018, Poland celebrates the 100th anniversary of the restoration of its independence after 123 years of partition. It is a special occasion for us to present to the international community Poland's achievements on the road to sustainable development. We believe that our experience, performance and good practices can contribute to the global process of building and consolidating a sustainable global economy.

Poland's strategy and priorities

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the General Assembly in 2015 coincided with the broad public debate in Poland on defining a new approach to development policy and the need to identify and give new impulses to development.

As a result, the new national development model was presented in the strategy for responsible development. The coherence of the strategy and the 2030 Agenda is visible in many aspects at the level of objectives, areas and priority actions, and, finally, indicators. The priorities of the socioeconomic development of Poland have been defined in all three dimensions of sustainable development:

- Social — the prime concern is, first of all, to reduce social exclusion, poverty and all kinds of social inequalities. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life of citizens. We focus on the development of human and social capital through access to knowledge and education, skills and health care (Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3 and 4).
- Economic — the priority is the construction of a strong, modern industry and support for entrepreneurship. Investments in innovation, the development of modern technologies and high value-added products, information technology and the full use of the digital revolution are of key importance. We support the

internationalization of Polish enterprises and promote the creation of Polish brands abroad (Sustainable Development Goals 2, 8 and 9).

- Environmental — we strive to improve the condition of the environment and the sustainable management of resources. Our aim is to increase the available water resources and achieve high water quality, rational management of natural and geological resources and effective waste management. The improvement of air quality in Polish cities remains the priority, as well as the protection of soils against degradation and the reduction of the impact of noise and electromagnetic fields, which will positively affect the health of residents (Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 12 and 15).

Poland implements socially and territorially sensitive development, with a high level of employment, good quality jobs and a large scale of entrepreneurship. The benefits of economic growth should be available to everyone, regardless of where they live (Sustainable Development Goal 10).

The achievement of the above-mentioned priorities will be supported by strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the State and its institutions (i.e., better quality of the enacted law, efficient administration and a strong system of strategic management of development processes) (Sustainable Development Goal 16).

We focus on cooperation, partnership and the joint responsibility of public entities, business and citizens over the course of development processes.

Polish approach to the implementation

In the report on the voluntary national review of Poland, we present a national approach to the implementation of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Each of the Goals is presented with a short diagnosis, an identification of the priorities in a given area and a presentation of key actions to implement the set priorities. We have also indicated the Government's strategic projects that contribute to the achievement of a specific Goal, as well as examples of initiatives implemented by non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs or local communities.

We share our experience in building partnership, dialogue and cooperation between the administration and stakeholders. We believe that our approach and the launch of the partnership for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals may serve as good practice for other countries. We also formulate plans for the future, focusing activities around social and economic areas and public policies that are accelerators for Poland's sustainable development.

To increase the efficiency of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the coming years, five issues seem to be of particular importance to Poland, as presented in the figure below.

The voluntary national review of Poland was elaborated using a participatory approach. Organizations representing various stakeholder groups were involved at the stage of drafting the report. A special team was appointed with the aim of preparing Poland for the 2018 voluntary national review, consisting of representatives of ministries, social organizations, socioeconomic partners, non-governmental organizations, public statistical organizations, civil society, academia and youth.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]

In keeping with its commitment to the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by world leaders at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda that was held in September 2015, Qatar has aligned the outcomes and targets of its National Development Strategy for 2018–2022 with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which comprises 17 targets. As a result, the goals and targets of the global sustainable development agenda are now a component of the National Development Strategy for 2018–2022, and the executive authorities will allocate the resources required for its implementation in accordance with the agreed upon timetable. The voluntary national review of Qatar for 2018 sets out its development achievements with respect to specific goals.

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Qatar is committed to ensuring that water is available to all inhabitants. Indeed, the country's entire population has access to safely managed drinking water. Sustainably managed sanitation services are available to all. Overall loss of desalinated water was reduced to 10 per cent in 2016. Act No. 20 (2015) on efficiency was promulgated, with a view to raising awareness among consumers of optimal water utilization methods. The State is currently developing a water strategy, which will be completed before mid-2018.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Qatar has strived to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. To that end, it has begun developing alternative energy sources. Some examples of its efforts in that regard include the Umm al-Hawl project and the Siraj Energy Company.

It has also strived to promote efficient utilization of energy and gas by establishing a national committee on renewable energy. In that connection, Qatar District Cooling Company (Qatar Cool) has implemented a plan to use treated wastewater, instead of potable water, to operate cooling plants. Qatar has also continued to implement its energy efficiency programme. Since its inception in 2012 and up to the end of 2016, the programme has managed to reduce per capita consumption of electricity by 18 per cent, and of water by about 20 per cent.

Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Qatar is committed to ensuring that its national master plan embodies the Qatar National Vision 2030 and serves as a strategic guide for developing vital and sustainable communities, such as cities and human settlements, and providing citizens and residents with a decent living. To that end, Qatar has put into place advanced infrastructure, enabled citizens to have access to modern housing and built universities, research centres, schools, museums, heritage villages and clubs. It has also established hospitals and health centres, playgrounds, parks, green spaces, special centres for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, and transportation, telephone and Internet networks. Doha, the capital, is a shopping and recreation destination that has an international conference centre, a digital system for numbering buildings and streets, and a world-class public library. The State has also built an international airport that is on par with the biggest in the world and an international port that helps to promote international trade. The national disaster response and recovery project was completed in 2016. In addition, Qatar will host the 2022 Fédération Internationale de Football Association World Cup™, an international cultural and sporting event. In accordance with the Qatar National Vision 2030, the State will invest available natural resources in the best manner possible, in order to meet the needs of the population without prejudice to the rights of future generations, and will build more smart cities.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Qatar has encouraged the efficient use of natural resources and green initiatives and buildings by reducing waste production through reduced consumption and recycling. The Musay'id solid waste management centre, which was opened in 2011, helped to reduce the amount of construction solid waste by 4.6 million tons in 2016. Qatar has also encouraged and promoted a culture of local manufacturing.

Qatar has encouraged consumers to optimize their use of water through awareness-raising and education initiatives. The country has shifted to the use of energy-efficient lights and air conditioners, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and reduced excessive use of groundwater through smart meters. Qatar has also encouraged the use of treated water in central cooling facilities and for irrigating feed crops and green spaces.

In addition, the Government has put into place systems to produce crops, fish and animals that will ensure food security and a high degree of self-sufficiency.

Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

Qatar strives to maintain its biodiversity. The proportion of the country's protected land area rose from 11 per cent to 23.6 per cent (nearly 2,744 km^2), while some 6.2 per cent (720 km^2) of the country's water area is also protected. In total, some 3,464 km^2 (30 per cent) of the country's area is protected. The purpose of such areas, which are mostly land areas, is to protect fragile desert ecosystems from hunting and overgrazing, combat desertification and halt land degradation.

Romania

[Original: English]

Romania developed the current voluntary national review for the occasion of celebrating 100 years of the Great Union, providing information about the implementation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (emphasizing the goals under review in 2018). The review presents the progress accomplished so far and the aims for 2030, resulted from the analysis of Sustainable Development Goal indicators from multiple sectors, and from here on will represent a reference line for the further development of Romania in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda.

The current programme of government stated from its vision the principle "leave no one behind", addressing all policies and priority actions in an integrated approach. The first national sustainable development strategy of Romania was elaborated in 1999 and reviewed in 2008 (one year after accession to the European Union), and now we are in the process of reviewing the strategy in order to localize the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The process of localizing the Goals started in 2016, feeding into both the voluntary national review and the review of the national sustainable development strategy.

The institutional architecture for sustainable development in Romania comprises an interministerial committee, with responsibility for coordinating the sustainable development policy, led by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for the Environment (with members who are Vice-Ministers from all governmental institutions), the Subcommittee for Sustainable Development of the Parliament of Romania and the Department for Sustainable Development within the Office of the Prime Minister.

Romania's biodiversity can be described as unique and generous, going through all levels of ecological systems and thus being the main reason why we should have a regional partnership to stop the decline of biodiversity in its tracks, tackling species extinction and ecosystems degradation owing to the impact of humans. The programme on environmental protection through biodiversity conservation (part of the programme of government for 2018–2020) addresses the fundamental role played by habitats in biodiversity conservation, with the main habitat targeted being forest ecosystems.

Romania's low dependency on imported energy resources, combined with structural changes in the economy, is leading to the downsizing and relative decline of energy-intensive industries, helping the country to avoid major disruptions during Europe's recurring energy crisis. Romania has a geographical location that favours wind, solar and water energy, as well as mineral resources with significant untapped potential caused by savings from the application of sustainable development and the circular economy. The energy sector makes an essential contribution to Romania's development and has a strong influence on economic growth, well-being and the environment. To meet consumer expectations in the long run, the Romanian energy sector must become cleaner, more economically robust and technologically advanced.

We acknowledge the potential of a leap to an adequate ecological-economical interface, with our natural capital represented by energy consumption. Once this potential is used, it is going to drive an unforeseen economic increase and a reduction in the human impact on the environment, unleashing sustainable technology and economic growth that would enable us to export energy and good practices for a regional green partnership. One such example of lowering our energy consumption for sustainable purposes is represented by the "Green House" programme, which is aimed at minimizing the use of energy necessary for household heating by means of thermal insulation and solar panels. In the past 15 years, we have managed to achieve a renewable energy share in energy production of just over 24 per cent, a target that has been settled for the year 2020, mainly with the help of solar panels and wind power, supplemented by the use of cogeneration.

Romania has a long tradition as a sustainable and resilient society, being one of the oldest sustainable rural civilizations in Europe, rich in natural resources and human knowledge on how to live in harmony with nature. The revolutionary work *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process*, published in 1971 by Nicolae Georgescu-Roegen, represents a milestone on developing the sustainable development concept. For Romania and for all countries, sustainable development is not one of several possible options, but the only rational prospect for advancement as a nation.

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]

- Saudi Arabia's voluntary national review, to be presented at the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development, is the Kingdom's first attempt to conduct a comprehensive review of the status of the Sustainable Development Goals, their alignment with the Saudi Vision 2030 and the actions taken by national entities, including the governmental sector, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- The review highlights the progress that has been made in all 17 areas and describes concrete plans that are either in place or in the planning phase to further the Kingdom's position in each of those areas. Key highlights in the report are Saudi Arabia's determination to dramatically raise the living standards of its people, by improving food and water security in an environment where the endowment of both is scarce, enhancing health services and targeting the elevation of the ranking of educational institutions, developing an extensive energy infrastructure and planning heavy investments in renewable energy, aiming at improving the business climate and to invest in the latest technologies, drawing road maps for better infrastructure for roads, railways, airports, ports, water and sewage systems, electricity networks and other areas, and laying out plans to reach sustainable urban development and protect biodiversity both on land and in water and plans on improving the performance of government

institutions and the quality of public services. A range of other areas are explored in more detail in the report.

- The report reasserts Saudi Arabia's strong commitment to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by taking actions and innovative approaches to align the 2030 Agenda and the Saudi Vision 2030, which is an ambitious development blueprint built around three themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation, and shares the same time frame and ultimate goals as the 2030 Agenda.

- The report of the voluntary national review establishes a baseline for tracking progress on the implementation of the goals and identifies some priorities for concentrated action in the implementation process. It also identifies opportunities, challenges and lessons learned and outlines the next steps in the implementation process.

- There are challenges, however, for each area of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that is where the focus of the relevant entity and the team for the Goals will be in the years to come. For example, the need to diversify the economy, improve the efficiency of government services, strengthen the participation of youth and women in the labour market and other priorities are at the forefront of the Government's reform effort, and as such are an important part of the Saudi agenda for the Goals.

- Saudi Arabia's commitment to the international development agenda is reflected not only in the actions it has undertaken domestically, but also the contributions it has generously provided to the development efforts of low-income countries through humanitarian and development assistance. As highlighted in the report, Saudi Arabia is one of the largest donors in the world, with a wide reach across geographical areas and development sectors. It has also become a significant provider of foreign direct investment in a number of developing countries in sectors of great significance to poverty alleviation, such as agriculture and food processing.

- Activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals will proceed hand in hand with the implementation of Vision 2030, which has already gathered significant momentum. Key priority areas for the Sustainable Development Goals process include improving the quality and coverage of Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the analysis of data, continuing the process of alignment of State programmes and strategies with global development goals as well as targets and indicators, developing strategies for strengthening collaboration among different actors, strengthening the role of the Goals at the subnational level, enhancing the monitoring and evaluation infrastructure for tracking progress towards the achievement of the Goals at the national and subnational level and promoting international partnerships around the Goals through development assistance, especially at the regional level.

Senegal

[Original: French]

Stakeholder ownership and participation

The process of integrating and aligning the Goals with the "Emerging Senegal" Plan was launched by the Government in January 2016 in the presence of all the stakeholders. Senegal's political commitment to implementing the Goals was rapidly apparent in a participatory and inclusive approach. Inclusive mechanisms were therefore devised.

These include the harmonized framework for monitoring and evaluation of public policies, creation of the ad hoc technical committee for the voluntary national review and establishment of the platform of civil society organizations to monitor the Goals and of the civil society working group. It will still be necessary to increase the participation of certain stakeholders such as the private sector, parliamentarians and local elected officials.

Integration, alignment and prioritization of the Sustainable Development Goals in public policies

Comparison of the strategic outline of the "Emerging Senegal" Plan with the Goals shows that the national development focus is fully consistent with the three dimensions of sustainable development. The Plan was formulated in 2012–2013 in an international context marked by the definition of a new post-2015 agenda. Senegal was a pilot country for national consultations throughout its 14 regions, with the participation of several categories of stakeholders, on the Millennium Development Goals and the local emphasis desired by the population. Together all these inputs determined the national priorities set in the Plan. Comparison of the Plan with the Goals shows that the Plan's priority activities cover almost 77 per cent of the Goal targets.

However, efforts will be made to clarify certain targets (23 per cent) in the second phase of the "Emerging Senegal" Plan (2019–2023) and, in particular, to improve the national system of priority statistical surveys for full reporting on all the Goal indicators.

Governance and institutional mechanisms (national, sectoral, local)

The Constitution of Senegal allows the President of the Republic to formulate and promote economic and social policy. Accordingly, in 2015 a system for monitoring and evaluating public policies was established by decree and placed under the authority of the President of the Republic. However, efforts must be made to enhance stakeholders' organizational, technical and statistical capacity to monitor the Goals.

Monitoring and implementation of the Goals

The workplan for monitoring and evaluating public policies allowed and facilitated monitoring of the Goals and a good level of reporting on the corresponding indicators (68.5 per cent). This enabled the Government, in collaboration with all categories of stakeholders, to organize a participatory process for the drafting of its first report on implementation of the Goals.

However, for successful implementation of the Goals, financing must be found for statistical operations.

Ensuring that no one is left behind

Efforts to publicize the Goals and to implement social welfare policies and territorial equity programmes have made it possible to help people who had been left behind. However, more outreach and an improved unified national registry are needed in order to attend to the specific needs of vulnerable people.

Main requirements for implementation of the Goals in Senegal:

- Improved coordination between the various planning stages and the institutional capacity of local public policy frameworks;
- Reporting on Goal monitoring indicators, taking into account their degree of disaggregation;

- Enhanced capacity of all stakeholders to formulate, monitor and disseminate the Goals;
- Mobilization of financial resources for implementation of the Goals;
- Improvement in the scientific and technical basis of arrangements for environmental evaluation (resilience of populations to environmental impacts and attention to sustainability issues).

Singapore

[Original: English]

As a small island city State with limited land and no natural resources, Singapore appreciates well the challenges of sustainable development. This is why our policies have always been designed with sustainability in mind in order to achieve our vision of a clean, green and sustainable Singapore in which our people and future generations can lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our first voluntary national review takes stock of the policies we have enacted since independence and assesses their contribution to Singapore's sustainable development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The review also examines areas in which our policies may be lacking and how we can overcome them to better achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The interministerial committee on the Sustainable Development Goals, co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, consulted all relevant government agencies and stakeholders, including businesses, youth organizations and civil society, in order to obtain an accurate and holistic picture of Singapore's progress with regard to sustainable development. While we sought to use the global indicator framework to assess our implementation of the 2030 Agenda, we found that some of the targets and indicators either did not apply to our context or we lacked data for them. In this regard, we used proxies where appropriate. We also used international rankings and indices to gain an independent perspective of our progress vis-à-vis other countries.

We assessed that our approach of integrating sustainability directly into our policy process has worked well for us overall. Through the voluntary national review process, we found many bright spots, or areas where our efforts have paid off, in our sustainable development journey so far. These include securing access to affordable and high-quality potable water for all Singaporeans and ensuring accessible and good quality education for our children. At the same time, the review allowed us to identify and reflect on several challenges and constraints we face, such as our ageing demographic. We were also able to identify opportunities that may arise to overcome these challenges.

Looking ahead, we must be resilient and innovative to seize these opportunities. We have put in place key policies, such as our SkillsFuture and Smart Nation initiatives, to prepare our nation for these challenges. To this end, the principles that have guided Singapore in the past, such as our forward-looking, long-term approach to sustainable development and our resolve to take tough decisions that are necessary for our development, will continue to serve us well.

An important takeaway from the voluntary national review process has been that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Countries should be free to pursue the Goals in the manner they choose, taking into account their national priorities and circumstances. At the same time, Singapore recognizes that there is much that countries can learn from one another in our common pursuit of sustainable development. We ourselves have benefited and continue to

benefit from the generous sharing by others of their own development experiences. We are thus committed to strengthening the global partnership for sustainable development, including through our technical assistance initiatives as well as serving as Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 2018.

Our report on the voluntary national review to the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development presents Singapore's domestic and international efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Besides being a snapshot of our progress so far, the review process has been a powerful reminder that sustainable development is a journey that requires continuous commitment from all of us. Singapore will continue to build on its progress in this journey towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and beyond.

Slovakia

[Original: English]

Sustainable development is our duty to future generations. While sustainable development has been an established concept for decades, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development transformed it profoundly, both in terms of its global significance and complexity. In order to achieve these new and comprehensive sustainability objectives, innovative approaches are in great need. Slovakia, a small but committed country, contributes to sustainable development at home and abroad through the following three main principles of implementation:

Sustainable development must lie at the heart of all public policies.

Slovakia is dedicated to implementing the 2030 Agenda by integrating it into all public policies at all levels. To accomplish this ambition, Slovakia has established the 2030 Agenda as the centrepiece of its strategic governance framework.

Individual commitment and cross-generational engagement is vital.

Slovakia's dedication, as a country, to the 2030 Agenda is necessary but not sufficient to achieve sustainable development. The effort must be shared by all — women and men, young and elderly.

Partnerships are essential for finding sustainable solutions.

The Government of Slovakia recognizes the importance of synergies between various stakeholders to boost capacities and resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and it is dedicated to sustaining an enabling environment for partnerships.

National priorities for the 2030 Agenda

In its voluntary national review, Slovakia will introduce its six priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that exhibit its tailor-made road towards a more resilient and sustainable society. Committed to the principle of partnership, Slovakia defined its priorities in a broad stakeholder participation process.

The six national priorities integrate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals along with country-specific objectives. In its voluntary national review, Slovakia will present the country's main challenges within each priority, existing policies and good practices to tackle those difficulties and, finally, a review of how Slovakia endorses the outlined priorities internationally.

The first priority is focused on education. It incorporates Sustainable Development Goals 4, 8 and 10, and thus contains aspects of decent employment as well. More than that, this priority emphasizes that education is a lifelong process, which should enable a life in dignity under rapidly changing circumstances and requirements.

The second key area concentrates on transformation towards an environmentally sustainable and knowledge-based economy in the context of demographic change. It integrates Sustainable Development Goals 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12, but also adds a significant local factor — population ageing.

Priority three pertains to the sustainability of settlements, regions and the countryside in the context of climate change, and incorporates Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 13 and 15. While a relatively wide-ranging priority, it places special emphasis on diminishing regional disparities.

The fourth national priority is focused on social inclusion. It integrates Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2 and 10, but even more importantly it underscores the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. On a global scale, Slovakia performs very well on eradicating poverty. Averages can be deceptive, however, and therefore this priority highlights the most vulnerable groups of society.

Key area five underlines the significance of the rule of law, democracy and security for the 2030 Agenda, once again in the Slovak context. It supports Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16, and moreover it emphasizes the role of strong institutions and data-based governance.

Finally, achievements in the sixth priority, good health, should contribute mainly to Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 10. Apart from addressing health issues in the aggregate population, it articulates Slovakia's ambition to tackle health disparities.

Way forward

The next step will be to integrate the outlined priorities into a national development strategy until 2030, as well as into sectoral policies and investment plans, in order to ensure a whole-of-government approach and adequate financing. To turn this ambition into reality, a robust institutional framework involving key stakeholders is inevitable. In Slovakia, the coordination of the 2030 Agenda is shared by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. A government council, involving key line ministers as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector and city and regional associations, has also been established.

Finally, yet importantly, Slovakia recognizes that continuity is essential for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. To this end, stronger involvement by the national parliament is foreseen in the coming period and partnerships with the non-governmental sector will be reinforced to safeguard Slovakia's steadiness on the way towards sustainability objectives.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been adopted in Spain by all public entities and at all levels. The Deputy Prime Minister has declared that the ambitious Agenda is part of State policy. All Government agencies are giving priority to it as a core element in the design and implementation of their public policies. The parliamentary groups of the Congress of Deputies, which are very active in follow-up and accountability, have called for the 2030 Agenda to serve as a cross-cutting pillar for all Government action.

In 2017, for the third consecutive year, the economy of Spain grew by more than 3 per cent, with the result that national income is now at pre-crisis levels and employment is rising steadily. However, there are still many challenges ahead. Alongside our policies aimed at implementing structural reforms, correcting

macroeconomic imbalances and deepening European integration, Spain will launch other new policies to promote modernization and competitiveness which prioritize the 2030 Agenda, environmental and social sustainability and energy efficiency, as set out in its 2018 national reform programme. All of this is being done in line with our heavily decentralized constitutional model.

To implement the 2030 Agenda a high-level interministerial coordination group has been established, which is chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and reports directly to the Prime Minister on its progress. All ministries are involved in the group, which has convened the autonomous communities and local entities to ensure full localization and joint drafting of the action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The action plan will cover the current term of office, after which it will be succeeded by a more comprehensive and far-reaching national sustainable development strategy. There is a firm commitment to establish a State-wide plan that is in line with the multi-stakeholder and multilevel design of the Agenda.

Extensive discussions have been held over the last few months with civil society organizations, the private sector, universities, thought and analysis centres and professional bodies, whose contributions have been incorporated into the action plan, thereby promoting the gradual building of partnerships. The communication campaign will explain how the 2030 Agenda will be implemented at the institutional level and will encourage maximum involvement of citizens. Close collaboration among all public entities and the impact of joint efforts have allowed for tangible progress to be made towards ambitious goals. To link all these pieces, an efficient governance model is being developed.

The plan assigns responsibility for each of the Goals and targets to specific ministries, which have been made focal points on the basis of their sectoral specialization. A database shows the distribution of responsibilities, which include responsibility for coordination, promotion and leadership. The plan describes in detail the policies and regulations adopted to ensure progress under each of the Sustainable Development Goals and establishes the baselines and indicators that will be used to assess the progress made.

Some initiatives serve as lever policies which have the added value of generating innovation, accelerating process or symbolizing the commitment. These include strategies on preventing and overcoming poverty and social exclusion, the circular economy and the social economy; plans on equal opportunities and scientific and technical research, and the master plan for Spanish cooperation; the Spanish urban agenda; and the draft law on climate change and energy transition.

Spain has been very active in the international arena in promoting implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Within the United Nations it created the first Sustainable Development Goals Fund in 2013 and, from the outset, it joined the Joint Policy Fund to Advance the 2030 Agenda through Integrated Policy. It has been equally active in the European Union, in the discussions of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Group of 20 and at the Ibero-American level through the Ibero-American General Secretariat and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The stakeholders are satisfied with the dynamics created, taking into account the tensions and expectations relating to the scope and complexity of the challenge and given the need for collective work at the national and international levels on the basis of rigorous technical standards.

Sri Lanka

[Original: English]

Introduction

Having overcome a three-decades-long terrorist conflict, Sri Lanka has begun its "transformation towards a sustainable and resilient society". The poverty rate dropped to 4.1 per cent in 2016 and the country is reaching towards upper-middle-income status, with a per capita gross domestic product of $4,066 in 2017. The unemployment rate has stood at below 5 per cent for the past seven years. Free education and health policies have resulted in high life expectancy (75 years) and a high youth literacy rate (98.7 per cent). The United Nations has recognized Sri Lanka among countries having achieved "high human development".

Stakeholder engagement

Increasing multi-stakeholder engagement for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a key objective of the voluntary national review process, which was designed by a multi-stakeholder committee, guided by a task force and facilitated by a consultant. Stakeholders across the country were consulted at five workshops. An online engagement platform was developed.

Key plans and strategies for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

The Government's "Vision 2025", which provides the overall vision, and the Public Investment Programme, the three-year rolling plan, are closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The national budget for 2018 is focused on a "blue-green economy" envisaged to create an eco-friendly environment where all can coexist harmoniously.

Means of implementation

The Sustainable Development Act, enacted in October 2017, provides for the formulation of a national sustainable development policy and strategy. The President has appointed the Sustainable Development Council to implement the Act.

The Government is mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into institutional plans as its main strategy to achieve the Goals.

Main challenges encountered and areas of progress

Poverty

The incidence of poverty as shown in the Multidimensional Poverty Index of 1.9 per cent in 2012 and 2013 reflects a reduction in poverty. However, pockets of poverty exist throughout the country and disparities have been observed among districts.

Efficiency and coverage of the existing social protection programmes are being improved to support the poor and vulnerable.

Health

Maternal mortality, under-5 mortality and neonatal mortality have reduced remarkably. Population ageing and the increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases are challenges. The health policy for the period 2016–2025 addresses issues in financing, regulations and primary health care.

Education

Sri Lanka has achieved near universality in the youth literacy rate, school enrolment and completion of primary education. Improving the quality and relevance of education, increasing access to higher and vocational education, standardizing non-State education and strengthening the linkage between general and vocational education remain challenges.

Gender equality

Sri Lanka ranks seventy-third out of 188 countries in the Gender Inequality Index. Gender inequalities are observed in labour force participation and political representation.

Regulations have been introduced to support women in balancing work with their responsibilities within the family. Women's share of representation in local authorities has been increased through legislation.

Water and sanitation

Around 89.5 per cent of the population have access to safe drinking water. However, disparities exist regionally and issues exist with regard to the quality and quantity of drinking water.

Around 87 per cent of the population possess on-site sanitation facilities. Providing facilities to the rest and managing wastewater in urban centres and industrialized areas remain challenges.

Energy

Sri Lanka has over 98 per cent coverage of domestic electricity supply. Renewable sources account for 53 per cent of total primary energy supply. Rising dependency on imports and the cost of energy are challenges. The Government is exploring renewable energy options, demand side management and regulation of the sector.

Transport

Public transport accounts for 57 per cent of passengers. Traffic congestion in urban areas, increasing private vehicle usage and road accidents are challenges. Measures such as railway electrification, the light rail transit system and fuel-efficient vehicles are being introduced to modernize transport.

Tourism

Sri Lanka has tremendous potential for tourism, with its geographical location and many diverse attractions within a relatively small area. Annual tourist arrivals have increased fivefold over the past 10 years. A transformation in the tourism strategy is needed for its sustainability.

Natural resources

Sri Lanka is one of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots. A high level of endemicity is observed in most taxonomic groups. However, a considerable number of species are threatened species. Meanwhile, deforestation has become a challenge owing to increased demand for land. Solutions have been identified in the national biodiversity strategic action plan.

Peace

Sri Lanka has launched the policy of "peace through development", centred on four "Rs": reconciliation, reconstruction, rehabilitation and recovery. Recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission are being implemented to heal and build sustainable peace and security.

Sudan

[Original: English]

The voluntary national review has been undertaken as a process for building awareness and understanding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. It aims to own and domesticate the 2030 Agenda and the Goals; use the Goals as a tool for identifying national development priorities and for accelerating change and transformation towards peace and development in the country; engage all stakeholders in the implementation process; develop a national framework for integration of the dimensions and pillars of the Goals; prepare matrices to facilitate stakeholder engagement in the process of implementation of the Goals; and prepare a national framework for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and a national platform for data and information management and sharing.

All activities have been undertaken by the Government of the Sudan under the auspices of the high-level national mechanism. They have been coordinated by the National Population Council as the secretariat of the mechanism, and have covered important meetings with key high-level officials, national consultation workshops, expert meetings, a ministerial forum, discussions with representatives of the parliament and with population groups, especially women's and youth groups, engagement of professionals and researchers as consultants to prepare policy and technical reports on specific topics and relevant themes, and media briefings and materials for publicity and awareness.

Key messages

The voluntary national review has been prepared for the Government of National Reconciliation. It is supported by the recommendations of the National Dialogue Conference (October 2015 to October 2016), which provide a national framework for transformation and policy reform. The key messages of the voluntary national review are:

Commitments to take actions

- The Government of the Sudan is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and to engaging all people in the betterment of their lives and the development of their country.
- A high-level institutional structure has been established to oversee the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in the country.
- Harmonization of the national development plans and strategies with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is a continuous process that needs to be implemented in all sectors.
- The levels of knowledge and technical capacity with regard to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals needs to be developed among all stakeholders: the Government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations.

Peace and stability dividend

- Peace and stability are prevailing through justice and the rule of law. This will support implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and harness the potential of leaving no one behind in peace and leaving no one behind in development.
- Peace and stability will create opportunities for communities affected by the war to recover and develop, and to transform from relief and humanitarian assistance to rehabilitation and development.

Agriculture transformation

- The Sudan's comparative advantage is in agriculture. Transformation of the agricultural sector by increasing productivity, adding value to agricultural production and targeting investment in agricultural industries and exportable agricultural goods will accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The national strategy for transforming the agricultural sector is through the allocation of a minimum of 10 per cent of the government budget to agriculture and the achievement of 6 per cent annual growth in agricultural gross domestic product.

Social transformation

- The social systems are changing from social affairs to social development, and people and communities are changing from being recipients of charitable and humanitarian assistance to being participants in development and producers of goods and services in their local communities.
- The incidence of poverty as shown in the Multidimensional Poverty Index for 2014 is 28.7 per cent. There are variations by state, education level of head of household, quality of household, sources of drinking water and type of sanitation services.
- The Sudan is experiencing a demographic dividend that must be harnessed through investment in education, especially girls' education, in health and in the creation of jobs and employment opportunities.

Means of implementation

- The debt burden is unsustainable, and the continuing reluctance to admit the Sudan to the group of heavily indebted poor countries is unjustifiable.
- In spite of the sanctions, the Sudan continued to revitalize this sector through investment in increasing the population register and its coverage and increasing registration of vital events.
- The Sudan invests in the use of information and data to generate new knowledge for the Sustainable Development Goals, especially by engaging researchers in universities and the centres of excellence in the country.

Switzerland

[Original: English]

Sustainable development in Switzerland and the 2030 Agenda

Since its adoption in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has driven the commitment of Switzerland to sustainable development, nationally and internationally. It thus underpins engagement for environmentally sound economic development within planetary boundaries, as well as for peace, respect for humanitarian law and human rights, with which sustainable development is inextricably linked.

From the outset, Switzerland was a driving force behind the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Switzerland advocated for a robust mechanism for follow-up and review, including voluntary national reviews and review of implementation of the Goals at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Since 1997, the Federal Council has defined its priorities for implementing sustainable development nationally in a quadrennial strategy; the current strategy is valid until 2019. A comprehensive system for monitoring sustainable development at the national level was put in place in 2003; it currently has 73 indicators, which are updated regularly.

Immediately after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, the Federal Council commissioned a comprehensive baseline assessment and gap analysis of the status of implementation at the federal level. The analysis concerned all 169 targets and covered both the domestic and international contributions of Switzerland.

Based on the existing national-level system, monitoring was expanded for the 2030 Agenda. The gap analysis indicates that, among the chosen 85 indicators, 39 show a positive trend, 12 show no significant evolution, 14 show a negative trend and for 20 no assessment was possible.

Switzerland is already at an advanced stage in achieving various Sustainable Development Goals and has already fulfilled a number of targets. For example, Switzerland is free from extreme poverty (target 1.1), and there is no hunger (target 2.1). Education (target 4.1) is free, compulsory and of good quality.

However, the baseline assessment identifies areas where efforts at the national and international levels beyond existing policies are needed in order to achieve the Goals. Consumption of natural resources (Goal 12), for example, is increasing overall. Use of resources from within Switzerland for consumption by its population is decreasing, but use of resources from abroad is increasing in an unsustainable way.

Other areas call for continued strong engagement so that the Goals can be achieved. With regard to the principle of "leave no one behind", Switzerland is also committed to enabling disadvantaged groups — for example, people with disabilities — to benefit from the country's prosperity.

Next steps for implementation

The analysis provides a good starting point for tackling the challenges in a targeted and focused manner. The challenges will be addressed mainly within the framework of existing sectoral policies, which exploit synergies where possible, observing the principles of effectiveness and efficiency, both nationally and internationally.

The 2030 Agenda is implemented at the federal, cantonal and communal levels, taking into account current obligations, competencies and the established division of tasks. Many cantons and communes have defined their own strategies for sustainable development. The federal Government will intensify the dialogue with the cantons and communes and support them in implementing the 2030 Agenda, for example, through platforms for exchange and networks.

The private sector, non-governmental organizations and the scientific community in Switzerland have also been committed to sustainable development for a long time. An advisory group composed of interested non-State actors has identified what it considers to be the priority challenges facing Switzerland. This group provides a platform for further dialogue with the federal Government and for partnerships for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Parliament is to be more closely involved in this process in the future.

The 2030 Agenda is an important reference framework for the international cooperation of Switzerland, which aligns its activities with the Sustainable Development Goals. It will continue to support partner countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda and in achieving the Goals globally. For example, Switzerland contributes to achieving Goal 17 by strengthening the mobilization of domestic resources and capacity-building, and by promoting a universal, rules-based multilateral trading system.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030

Switzerland will continue to support the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, which has become an important element of the country's strategic cycle on sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda is ambitious and challenging. Switzerland is committed to helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Togo

[Original: French]

Context

Togo is participating for the third time in the voluntary national review organized by the United Nations since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015.

The drafting of this report was participatory and inclusive, involving all development stakeholders.

The Goals were integrated in planning instruments following finalization of Togo's National Development Plan. Concerted governance for the preparation of this document involved all the development stakeholders. The Goals are being implemented in the context of this new Plan, with the overall goal of "achieving a structural transformation of the economy to achieve growth that is strong, sustainable, resilient and inclusive, creating decent jobs and improving social well-being".

Progress in implementing Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17

Togo is implementing the six Goals to be reviewed during the third session of the High-Level Political Forum as follows:

Goal 6

Togo has adopted a strategy for water resource preservation. The percentage of inhabitants with access to clean water increased from 50 per cent in 2015 to 52 per cent in 2017. However, there are still many sanitation infrastructure problems: only 7 per cent of the population had access in 2017. 1,348 old water wells with manually operated pumps were rehabilitated and 1,401 new wells were drilled.

Goal 7

A project for the electrification of nearly 271 rural locations is being implemented in 2017–2018. Four small solar photovoltaic power stations with a total cumulative output of 600 kWc have been installed, as well as 10,000 solar lamps in the five regions of Togo. Access to electricity increased from 22.5 per cent in 2008 to 35.6 per cent in 2016. For rural access, the rate increased from 3 per cent in 2008 to 6.3 per cent in 2016.

Goal 11

The proportion of locations with over 5,000 inhabitants that have current master schemes for development and urban planning increased from 31 per cent in 2015 to 37 per cent in 2017.

540 low-cost housing units have been built, as well as an engineered landfill with a capacity of 250,000 tons of household waste a year.

Goal 12

Over 1,343 hectares of irrigated land and lowland, with total water control and 20 planned agricultural development zones covering 1,729 hectares are facilitating access to land for over 2,561 producers.

A microfinancing agreement has been concluded with the United Nations Environment Programme for implementation of a project entitled "Sustainable public procurement and ecolabelling", which will eventually form the basis for a national policy of sustainable public procurement and for its action plan.

Goal 15

The proportion of protected ecosystems increased from 7 to 7.4 per cent between 2011 and 2015. 7,595 hectares have been developed, enriched or restored; 11,713 hectares have been developed for agroforestry; 450,000 hectares have been sustainably developed and over 8,398 hectares of State forests have been reforested.

Goal 17

In 2012, the Government created the Togolese Revenue Office and the Togo Invest Corporation, a State holding company to mobilize domestic public resources, optimize public-private partnerships for major investments and improve the business climate.

Togo is a beneficiary of the Threshold Program of the Millennium Challenge Corporation in the United States and, since 2017, of the textile visa under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which allows it to export textile products and apparel to the United States on preferential terms.

Challenges and prospects

The main challenges facing Togo in implementing the Goals concern secure land tenure, decentralization, digitalization of the economy, the national statistical system, human resources capacity-building and financing of the economy.

United Arab Emirates

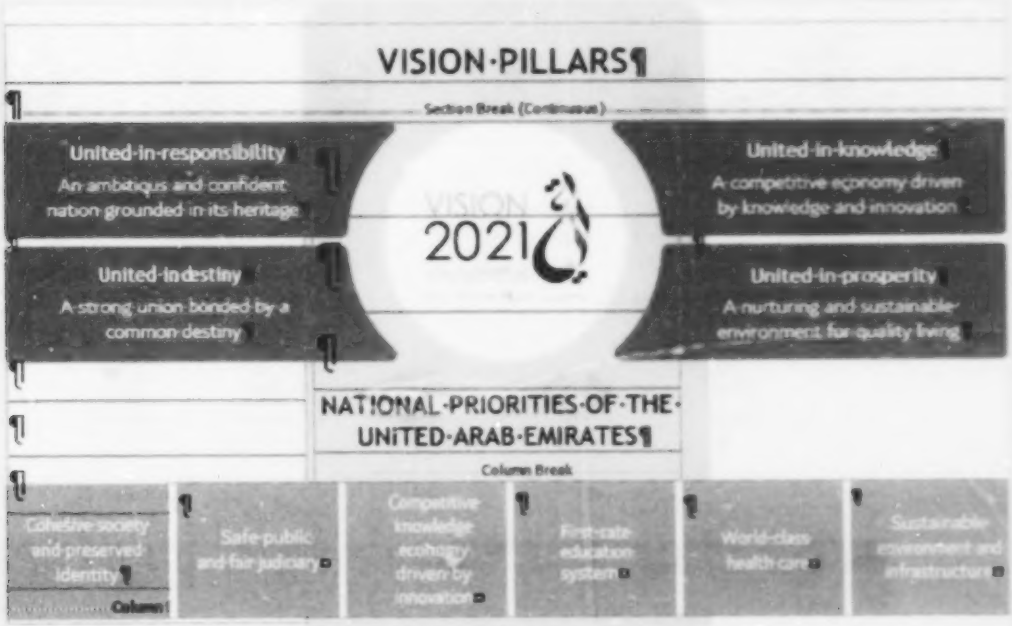
[Original: English]

Sustainable development and national development priorities

The United Arab Emirates was a strong advocate for the formulation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The commitment of the United Arab Emirates to sustainable development is at the heart of the country's vision for its future. The ideas of sustainable development permeate the national development plan, Vision 2021, and the plans of its seven emirates.

The national development priorities of the United Arab Emirates, or the National Agenda, guide efforts towards Vision 2021. Multi-stakeholder engagement was at the centre of the formulation process for the agenda, involving over 300 officials from 90 federal and local government entities, participants from civil society organizations and the private sector and academic experts. The agenda specifies a wide-ranging work programme emphasizing sustainable development and centred on four pillars, six national priorities and 52 federal-level key performance indicators (see figure I).

Figure I
United Arab Emirates national development agenda, Vision 2021



Institutional arrangements for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

The National Committee on Sustainable Development Goals was formed in 2017 and is chaired by the Minister of State for International Cooperation. The Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority serves as Vice-Chair and secretariat of the Committee.

The Committee comprises 17 federal government organizations (see figure II). It serves as a platform for multi-stakeholder engagement and provides the whole-of-

government systems and procedures for information-sharing, policy coherence and review in the run-up to the year 2030.

Since 2017, the Committee has:

- Mapped targets of the Sustainable Development Goals to the National Agenda of the United Arab Emirates and prioritized targets to pursue on an annual basis.
- Determined the criteria for incorporating targets of the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development agenda and aligned monitoring and reporting cycles with the work programme of the national statistics system.
- Assessed the scope of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals given resource capacities and constraints in a particular year.

Figure II
Institutional arrangements for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

United Arab Emirates National Committee on Sustainable Development Goals
The Cabinet of the United Arab Emirates formed the National Committee on Sustainable Development Goals in January 2017, which is led by the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority and includes federal government entities. 15 members in 2017, expanded to 17 members in 2018
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Private sector advisory council for SDGs
Nominations for the council are still being sought
National implementation
Monitoring and reporting

Implementation, review and follow-up of the Sustainable Development Goals

The United Arab Emirates has one of the best performing public sectors in the world, one that operates in an open and transparent way and is underpinned by a systematic performance framework, a highly skilled civil service and efficient and innovative mechanisms for the delivery of public services.

To implement the National Agenda of the United Arab Emirates, policy initiatives are incorporated in the Government's performance management framework and linked to five-year strategic and operational plans of federal ministries. This framework is flexible enough to incorporate the Sustainable

Development Goals. The Government will leverage all aspects of this architecture to ensure that the Goals are localized and harmonized across federal and local government, that policy coherence is achieved using mechanisms that align national and subnational policies and that enabling technologies and stakeholder relationships are deployed to their full effect to achieve the Goals.

Stakeholder engagement

Broad stakeholder engagement is an established part of policymaking processes and includes consultation with youth groups, the private sector, knowledge institutions and civil society. Beyond established mechanisms, the National Committee on Sustainable Development Goals has developed a comprehensive communications strategy to engage societal stakeholders on the Sustainable Development Goals.

With the appointment of a Minister of State for Youth Affairs in 2016, the Government signalled its ambitions to involve its youth to determine the future direction of the country. Subsequently, the Emirates Youth Council and seven emirate-wide local youth councils were launched. These youth councils are involved in the official deliberations concerning the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A private sector advisory council was established and reports to the Vice-Chair of the National Committee on Sustainable Development Goals. The Council will engage with the business community to raise awareness of the Goals through a variety of events and media platforms.

Global partnerships

The United Arab Emirates endeavours to meet its international obligations towards the 2030 Agenda. The 2016 foreign aid report presents the country's foreign assistance contributions through the lens of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In 2016, the United Arab Emirates was recognized as the world's largest donor, surpassing the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income as official development assistance and reaching 1.12 per cent. The United Nations target of 0.15–0.20 per cent of gross national income as official development assistance to least developed countries was also achieved, with disbursements reaching 0.36 per cent.

The Sustainable Development Goals feature prominently in global events hosted by the United Arab Emirates. The "SDGs in Action" platform is a permanent feature of the annual World Government Summit held in Dubai. In addition, the Goals, and sustainability more broadly, will be a central feature of Expo 2020, to be held in Dubai.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]

The involvement of public and private actors in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an opportunity to mobilize joint action around common goals in the territory of Uruguay, not only to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants, but also to build a future that is more inclusive, environmentally sustainable and economically viable for all.

In 2017, Uruguay embarked on a phase of awareness-raising and dissemination of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.

This report follows a human rights approach and incorporates input from various segments of society, especially the private sector.

Sustainable Development Goal 6:

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation are fundamental human rights laid down in the Constitution of the Republic. In Uruguay, 99.4 per cent of the population has access to water and 95.2 per cent has access to safe drinking water.

The national water plan includes projects and programmes aimed at ensuring integrated and sustainable water resources management and access to water and sanitation for the entire population.

Sustainable Development Goal 7:

Uruguay has been successful in the area of energy and is a world leader in the use of renewable sources. Its success has been underpinned by a long-term State policy and a solid regulatory and institutional framework. Uruguay has one of the highest rates of electricity coverage in Latin America, with access to electricity for 99.7 per cent of the country's population.

Sustainable Development Goal 11:

This Goal is broken down into three areas: social inclusion and well-being; sustainability and climate change; and urban governance.

With regard to social inclusion and well-being, achievements in ensuring access to housing have included the diversification of access programmes to address the wide range of situations and needs identified in the five-year housing plan. In terms of transport, almost all cities of over 30,000 inhabitants have public transport services. With regard to access to green and public spaces, the design and development of public spaces has been redefined with community involvement.

With regard to sustainability and climate change, early-warning systems have been created to mitigate the effects of natural disasters. In addition, the Government is working to improve risk analysis work and develop prevention and management tools. In the area of climate change mitigation and adaptation, a national climate change policy has been adopted.

With regard to urban governance, inter-agency work has been carried out to advance local governance at the city level with the broad participation of civil society.

Sustainable Development Goal 12:

Uruguay has a regulatory framework and public policies that promote the sustainable management of water resources, the responsible and sustainable use of land and surface water, the use of clean technologies, the reduction of waste and the use of reusable packaging.

In 2008, it adopted a long-term energy policy which focuses on the diversification of its energy mix, with special emphasis on renewable energies, promoting energy efficiency and ensuring universal and secure access to energy for all sectors of society. The Government has introduced various plans and programmes to promote cleaner production and improve the environmental performance of the production sectors. A system has been established to assess environmental impacts as a preventive environmental management tool.

In 2016, a national system for competitiveness and transformation of the production sector was created to promote economic development and innovation in line with the principles of sustainability, social equity and environmental and territorial balances.

Sustainable Development Goal 15:

Progress has been made in ensuring conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystems by developing and implementing a national biodiversity strategy and a strategic plan for the national system of protected areas. A national strategy for native forests is being prepared to control degradation caused by the invasion of alien species.

The Land Management and Sustainable Development Act authorizes departmental governments to categorize land and define criteria for its sustainable use, and establishes a policy on planning and managing land use in order to combat erosion resulting from unsustainable agriculture.

Viet Nam

[Original: English]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals are in line with the long-term development strategy of Viet Nam. In our endeavour to achieve this agenda, the Government of Viet Nam is committed to mobilizing all resources and the participation of government ministries and agencies at all levels, organizations, communities and the people.

Seventeen global Sustainable Development Goals have been nationalized into 115 Viet Nam Sustainable Development Goal targets in our "National action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", based on Viet Nam's development context and priorities and building on the successful implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, Viet Nam has paid particular attention to vulnerable groups such as the poor, people with disabilities, women, children and ethnic minorities through a number of policies aimed at promoting social equality to ensure that no one is left behind.

To date, Viet Nam is proud to have achieved a number of Sustainable Development Goal-related results, including: (a) a substantial reduction in the national multidimensional poverty rate from 9.9 per cent in 2015 to less than 7.0 per cent in 2017; (b) health insurance coverage reaching 86.4 per cent in 2017; (c) a primary net enrolment rate of 99.0 per cent; (d) women's representation in the National Assembly in the 2016–2021 term reaching 26.7 per cent; (e) the proportion of households having access to safe water reaching 93.4 per cent in 2016; (f) access to electricity for more than 99 per cent of Vietnamese households in 2016; (g) Internet use reaching 54.2 per cent; (h) annual growth rates in gross domestic product at 6.7 per cent, 6.2 per cent and 6.8 per cent for 2015, 2016 and 2017, respectively; (i) improvements in the protection and management of the environment and natural resources and an increase in forest cover to 41.5 per cent in 2017; and (j) a reduction in inequality and an improvement in the promotion of access to justice and information.

Moreover, sustainable development principles have been thoroughly mainstreamed into the 2011–2020 social and economic development strategy and the 2016–2020 social and economic development plan. In the coming years, the Sustainable Development Goals will be fully and further integrated into Viet Nam's 2021–2030 social and economic development strategy and 2021–2025 social and economic development plan.

The Government of Viet Nam has created an enabling legal environment and encouraged the foreign and domestic private sector to invest and do business in line with sustainable development principles. Accordingly, the Viet Nam Business Council for Sustainable Development is an initiative aimed at enhancing connections

within the business community to enable it to share and spread good practices, as well as to play an important role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Viet Nam is now a lower middle-income country and is also one of the countries most affected by climate change. Increasingly integrated into the world economy, Viet Nam is therefore more vulnerable to its fluctuations. As such, to successfully achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Viet Nam requires technical and human resources and financial support, as well as strengthened cooperation and exchange of knowledge with the international community. At the same time, Viet Nam is eager to share its own experiences and innovative approaches with other countries.

Going forward, Viet Nam will therefore need to improve society's awareness of and mobilize the participation of all stakeholders in sustainable development efforts; enhance the institutional set-up and policy frameworks for sustainable development; foster cooperation between the Government and the business sector, domestic organizations and the international community in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; issue national Sustainable Development Goal indicators and strengthen national statistical capacity; mainstream the Goals into development policies and strategies; and strengthen the mobilization of resources, particularly from the private sector, for implementation of the Goals.

The preparation of the voluntary national review thus provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and mobilize the participation of different stakeholders, including the National Assembly, the Government, the United Nations in Viet Nam, political, social, professional and mass organizations, international and local non-governmental organizations, the business community and other development partners.

Viet Nam is confident that it will succeed in implementing the 2030 Agenda for current and future generations. In our enduring commitment as a responsible member of the international community, Viet Nam will continue to contribute positively to global efforts aimed at leaving no one and no country behind. This is our global endeavour for sustainable development.

State of Palestine

[Original: English]

The State of Palestine's political commitment to and national ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals

- The State of Palestine committed itself to working with all partners in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. To implement this commitment, the Palestinian Council of Ministers issued a decree establishing a national team to head the monitoring and implementation of the Goals in Palestine. The team is headed by the Prime Minister's Office and is composed of the membership of all relevant partners.

- "Leave no one behind" was chosen as a slogan for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The realization of these slogans in Palestine remains extremely difficult so long as the Palestinian people are not able to exercise their right to self-determination. The concept of sustainability is inextricably linked to independence. A military occupation hinders the exercise of sovereignty, including the exploitation of natural resources, and obstructs sustainable development.

- The 2030 Agenda recognizes the people's right to self-determination without the provision of means to implement this right. Therefore, the State of Palestine, for the purposes of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, perceives that there should be an eighteenth Sustainable Development Goal, which is: "Ending the

occupation, and the consolidation of the independent State of Palestine on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital".

National priorities of sustainable development

- The Palestinian Government launched the National Policy Agenda for the years 2017–2022 under the slogan of "Putting citizens first". The National Policy Agenda lays the foundation for three pillars for the future of the State of Palestine: path to independence, government reform and improvement of services for citizens, and sustainable development.
- The National Policy Agenda has adopted 75 of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account the impediments of the Israeli occupation, the dire fiscal situation of the Palestinian Government and the sharp decline of donor aid to Palestine.

Challenges in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

- The continuation of Israel's occupation and its systematic and widespread violations of international law continue to be the biggest impediment for Palestine to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, ending the occupation is a prerequisite for enabling Palestine to meet its commitments towards sustainable development.
- Population growth: estimated at 2.8 per cent in 2017, population growth entails increasing demand on basic services. By 2030, there will be a need to construct 1,650 new schools and 36 new hospitals and create 1 million new jobs.
- The State of Palestine is further challenged by the insufficient resources to fund the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The World Bank estimates that the Palestinian people are prevented from generating $3.4 billion of their potential revenue owing to Israel's restrictions.
- There is an imminent need for capacity-building in Palestinian national institutions. The State of Palestine hopes to benefit from the expertise of friendly States in order to institute the best-known practices.
- The lack of available data for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets remains an obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Building partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

- The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals requires the cooperation of all stakeholders. The Government of the State of Palestine adopted a set of principles to ensure the active participation of non-governmental actors in the implementation of the Goals.
- The State of Palestine continues to make active efforts in strengthening its partnership with the international community. In 2017, the State of Palestine concluded the reform of its local aid coordination structure, which will strengthen the alignment of donor aid with national priorities.

Moving forward

The Government of the State of Palestine, together with all of its partners, will focus on the following:

- Implementing the 75 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals that are in line with the National Policy Agenda.

- Strengthening community participation in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. A stockholders' engagement strategy will be developed and implemented.
- Developing a national system for reporting on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This will be coupled with an annual review in cooperation with all stakeholders. The review will be submitted to the national forum on sustainable development.
- Collaborating with all relevant stakeholders to provide the data needed for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.
- Developing regional and global partnerships in support of national Sustainable Development Goal priorities.
- Raising public awareness with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals at the national and local levels.
- Strengthening the role of the local media in monitoring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.